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## CONSTANCY

AND

CONTRITION.

VOL. I.

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# C O N S T A N C Y

AND

## CONTRITION.

S'onesto amor può meritar mercede, E se pietà può quant' ella suole, Mercede avrò.

PETRARCA.

The crime of old, which seemed long dead Lifts up again its head! THOUGHTS IN PAST YEARS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1844.



#### LONDON:

Printed by Schulze and Co., 18, Poland Street.

## DEDICATED

TO MY

## MOTHER.

Je sais combien il est difficile d'écrire au gré des connaisseurs. Je ne suis pas plus indulgent qu'eux pour moi-même; et si j'ose travailler, c'est que mon goût extrême pour cet art l'emporte encore sur la connaissance que j'ai de mon peu de talent.—Voltaire. Zaïre. Avis au Lecteur.

## CONSTANCY.

#### CHAPTER I.

Oh! quante sono incantatrici, oh quanti Incantator tra noi, che non si sanno, Che con lor arti, uomini e donne amanti Di sè, cangiando i visi lor, fatto hanno!

E con simulazion, menzogne e frodi Legano i cor d'indissolubil nodi.

ARIOSTO.

B

LADY SYLVESTER came forward to receive her visitor with the utmost affection; taking both her hands in hers, she kissed her first on one cheek, and then on the other, exclaiming with great tenderness:

"My dearest girl, my sweet Mercedes, the very person in the world whom I most desired to see. You must come to me to-day. You must dine with me. I can hear of no excuse, my love. Arundel is coming up from Oxford instead of going into Yorkshire. You must dine with us, and afterwards we must take him to the opera, VOL. I.

for he will not stay at home all the evening; and he is so handsome that I like to show him. By the bye, of course, you were going?"

And she cast an inquiring glance at Mercedes.

Miss Ratcliffe coloured, and for a moment did not reply; then, with a slight embarrassment of manner, she said:

"In fact, dear Lady Sylvester, I had no intention of going to the opera to-night; for I have lent my box to Mrs. Johnson, my cousin."

"Dear me, that is unfortunate. Who did you say, my love? Mrs. Jackson—who is she?"

"Mrs. Johnson," replied Mercedes with more confidence, "is my cousin."

"Oh, indeed! But still if she have no box of her own, I should think that it would be quite the same to her what night she goes. Don't you agree with me, dearest? How kind and generous you always are! Always forgetting yourself and thinking of others! Well! we must stay at home to-night and let this tiresome Mrs. Johnson enjoy Donizetti's delightful music; unless, indeed, you like, as I said before, to lend her the box another evening."

Mercedes coloured: she felt ashamed to adopt Lady Sylvester's suggestion, and yet was very desirous to oblige her. She scarcely knew her cousin, and there was very little sympathy between the native refinement and the native vulgarity that alike distinguished them. Deliberation has long been proverbially dangerous, and

here, as usual, it afforded time for the enemy to gain the day. Mercedes, when she replied, did not refuse to accede to a proposal made by Lady Sylvester, that she should write a note to her cousin, explaining how she had thoughtlessly forgotten that her opera box had already been placed at the disposal of another friend. Having thus decided this point, Lady Sylvester turned the conversation immediately to other subjects, and found, or made, many opportunities of mentioning her son; but Mercedes felt a species of remorse at the idea of recalling the trifling act of kindness which she had performed, that prevented her from deriving the same pleasure from Lady Sylvester's society that it usually afforded her. Feeling her spirits flag, though she had not time to analyse the cause. she took leave of her friend sooner than she had intended and departed.

When alone, she began to think over the apology she had undertaken to offer; and on a calm recollection of it, she was so shocked to find herself on the brink of being guilty of such meanness as to commit a deliberate falsehood to paper that she burst into tears. What was she to do? Should she return to Lady Sylvester and declare her incapacity to act thus? How weak and childish an appearance would such conduct wear! Besides, it would convey a rebuke which she was certain was undeserved. Lady Sylvester could only have spoken without thought—a bright and consolatory idea entered her mind; and springing up in the car-

riage, she pulled the check-string impetuously, and desired the servant to drive immediately to the bookseller's. When there, she eagerly inquired what opera boxes for the evening were free; there was only one remaining, and the price demanded for it was exorbitant. She hesitated for a moment; the man respectfully assured her that inquiries elsewhere would be useless. Mercedes hesitated no longer, but cheerfully paying the price he named, drove home, and despatched the ticket of it to her cousin. She now felt partially restored to self-satisfaction, but still smarted a little under the sense of folly.

Perhaps this introduction of Mercedes to our readers will make them suspect that such an imputation would not be groundless. We will, therefore, explain who Mercedes was, and how she was situated. When we proceed to say that she was at this time only eighteen, remarkably beautiful, the only child of a most indulgent father, and motherless almost from her birth, we hope at once to engage feelings of interest and compassion on her side, that shall induce them to consider her faults, be they what they may, with a predisposition to leniency.

Mr. Ratcliffe, the father of Mercedes, was a merchant, whose career in commerce had been attended with singular success; his wealth had increased to an enormous extent, and the interests of this child, the sole object of his affections, were the end of all his labours. Her mother was a Portuguese; a woman whose remarkable beauty and

sweetness of disposition had won his love. Their union was productive of mutual happiness; but she seemed to miss the warmth of her native skies, and daily faded away; her unhappy husband was ere long forced to open his eyes to the fact that death was approaching with rapid strides. That she should immediately quit England was indispensable; that he should accompany her was impossible. His duty to all engaged with him in the daring speculations in which he had embarked, forbid him to entertain the thought. In this agony of distress he knew not where to turn.

In early life, Mr. Ratcliffe had been united in ties of the strictest friendship with a young man considerably his senior, of the name of Wilmot, whom a taste for study, retired habits, and extreme shyness and reserve of nature, wholly unfitted for those active walks in life which, for Ratcliffe, possessed peculiar charms. His learning and his abilities qualified him to undertake with confidence the charge of pupils, and by so doing he gained a scanty subsistence, but was unable to entertain any hope of uniting himself to a woman to whom he had been long and sincerely attached. felt much compassion for his situation, and he became greatly interested in his success. He was himself by no means so friendless as Wilmot; and before he had decided on the avocation which he finally pursued, a gentleman offered him a small living in the church, telling him, that, with his abilities, he thought he might feel assured of rising in this profession with much greater certainty, and at a less expense of anxiety and toil than in any to which the natural bent of his mind inclined him. But so total was the distaste that Ratcliffe felt for the quiet secluded life proposed to him, that he at once rejected the offer. some hesitation, and more of fear than hope, he afterwards ventured to suggest to his friendly patron the substitution of Wilmot instead of himself; and to his joy, his suggestion was favourably received. Great was the gratitude of the two persons whom he thus contributed to make so unexpectedly happy; and a day arrived in which they manifested the sincerity and strength of their feeling towards him yet more in actions than in words. At the time when Mr. Ratcliffe was so deeply distressed at the prospect of sending his young wife, perhaps, to die in a foreign land, Mrs. Wilmot came forward and offered to accompany her to Madeira, and to remain there during the winter with her.

Such a proposition, as little to be hoped for as to be requested, was, after the combat of many scruples, at last accepted; and Mrs. Wilmot attended for months on the unfortunate invalid with the unwearied care of a sister. She finally expired in her arms, commending the infant Mercedes, who had remained beneath her father's roof, to her love. This injunction she had but little opportunity of obeying. The young heiress was the object of too much solicitude to need the care of the humble

clergyman's wife, and in the privacy of her country life she soon lost sight of her charge.

We have said enough to show that Mr. Ratcliffe was a man of a generous disposition and a warm heart; his character also bore strong marks of ambition and vanity. The first had obtained all the food it desired in the high station he had reached, and the esteem and repute which he had long enjoyed; but the gratifications that the latter looked for were to be procured only through his child.

Her beauty—so like her mother's—her loveliness, her excellence, were the themes on which his thoughts still ran; for her he toiled—for her he amassed riches; and he deemed no alliance worthy of her but with the highest of the land. He had aspirations for her far beyond any he had ever had for himself. He had never sought favour with the great; he had never coveted their titles; on the centrary, he had been well content to rank himself as one of the most distinguished of the aristocracy of wealth, and neither envied nor flattered those who were numbered in the aristocracy of rank. But as his child grew old enough to enter into society, such a "change came o'er the spirit of his dream," that he really felt more gratitude to Lady Sylvester for the fondness which she lavished on his daughter, than had ever been excited by him for any benefit received, except, indeed, by the attendance of Mrs. Wilmot on her dving mother.

Though Mr. Ratcliffe thus betrayed great weakness, and an undue estimation of the pomps and vanities of the world, his affection for his child was far too strong to allow him to place any object in competition with her happiness. She was not the tool with which his ambition designed to work; her welfare was in all sincerity the object he had in view; therefore, while he confided his daughter to Lady Sylvester he could not divest himself of many an anxious care on her account. In spite of his willingness to be blinded, he could not wholly blind himself to the dangers of the position which he had chosen for her. He could not be ignorant that many a scheme would be laid to entrap the heiress of so much reputed wealth; he knew that her simplicity and her youth would be practised on by many deceivers; and he felt that as long as she was at the mercy of the fashionable multitude with which he had bid her mingle he should never know peace of mind.

In his anxiety to secure her from the perils which he foresaw, but from which nevertheless he would not withdraw her, he attempted to arm her against them by revealing to her their existence; by preparing her to distrust, and teaching her to examine. So much had he insisted on the mercenary motives which he told her would actuate most of those who would address her in terms of flattering devotion, that she shrank in terror away from much that would otherwise have allured her. Entrusted as she was to Lady Sylvester,

she believed that in her, her father must have confidence; and sick of suspicion, which was most repugnant to her nature, she delighted in the idea that she was permitted to love her friend without pausing for scrutiny, and to trust in the sincerity of the love which was professed in return.

With Lord Sylvester, the present Viscount, Mr. Ratcliffe was well acquainted, and for him he felt an esteem that he accorded to few. The manly uprightness and simplicity of his character, the singular amiability of his deportment towards his equals, his inferiors, and his dependants; the selfrespect and self-reliance which all his actions evinced, excited Mr. Ratcliffe's unqualified approbation. The possibility of an attachment to his daughter springing up in the heart of the young nobleman, was by no means an unpleasing subject of meditation to Mr. Ratcliffe; but he did not disguise from himself that, as his personal appearance was even less than commonly prepossessing, and as his devotion to arts and learning, his studious habits, and consequent abstraction from general society, had hitherto induced him to allow his youth to pass on without forming any alliance, though rank, wealth, and beauty were alike within his reach, it was highly improbable that he would be the first to seek, and still more so, that he would be the first to win the affections of so young and lovely a woman as his daughter. pleased him to imagine that in the eagerness with which Lady Sylvester sought Miss Ratcliffe's acquaintance he could read a similar desire, and it was with disappointment and a secret misgiving, that he casually discovered that she was only the step-mother of the present Viscount; and that she had a son then at the university. This discovery caused him to feel a degree of uncertainty as to her plans for the future; but the intimacy which had already sprung up was too flattering to his vanity, and afforded too many present advantages to his daughter, to allow him rashly to cut it short; and, besides, he could not resolve to deprive Mercedes of an intercourse which seemed to give her so much pleasure.

## CHAPTER II.

If brighter beams than all he threw not forth, 'Twas negligence in him, not want of worth.'

POPE.

Son propre est de donner du tour à ce qu'il dit, et de la grâce à ce qu'il fait.

Mercedes felt herself stimulated by the expectation of meeting the son of her friend for the first time, to bestow more than ordinary care on her toilette. His mother had always spoken of him so much, and so tenderly; he was so evidently the idol of her heart, and the object of all her ambition; she was so engrossed by plans for his future advantage, so sanguine in her expectations of success that awaited him, that Mercedes, influenced by the warm affection that Lady Sylvester's lavished kindness had already won from her, for her sake regarded him with an interest beyond that of mere curiosity.

Perhaps Mercedes was vain; she was certainly not without pride—defensive, not offensive pride. She saw that her father aspired to place her in a rank of society above that to which her birth and station entitled her; such as in fact could only be purchased by his wealth. But to dwell upon this

fact was too mortifying; it pleased her better to believe that the charms of her person, and the qualities of her mind, when seen and known, would not be without weight; and it also pleased her better to attribute those sarcasms which the conduct of the father called forth, and which sometimes reached the ears of the daughter, wholly to envy and jealousy, rather than to give any consideration to the truths which they in some measure contained. Still, in spite of thus striving to fortify herself against all rude antagonists, she entered those circles in which she felt her footing to be insecure, and her reception doubtful, with some reluctance, and a shyness, partly arising from her unprotected youth, and partly from a species of proud humility that made her shrink from those whom she felt to be at once above and below her

In this uncomfortable state of mind, the extreme kindness which she met with from Lady Sylvester, the acknowledged fascination of her manners; her perfect self-possession and knowledge of every thing which it was desirable for Mercedes to know; the ready tact and unoppressive good nature with which she instructed and directed her, gave a charm to her society to which Mercedes was naturally fully alive. "Soyez complaisant sans faire valoir vos complaisances," is the advice of a French author; and Mercedes would have said that the injunction was never more completely fulfilled than by her beloved Lady Sylvester.

Miss Ratcliffe had heard from many that this family were remarkable for the pride of high birth: probably this information rendered doubly delightful the cordial affection which she met with from her newly found friend. But, in the progress of their acquaintance she felt disposed to acquiesce in the truth of the imputation, even as relating to her individually, so far, that had any one said to her: "Lady Sylvester designs you for her son," she would have ridiculed and rejected the supposition. She had been led to imagine, from all she had observed and all she had heard, that nothing would occasion a severer mortification to Lady Sylvester, than for Mr. Wentworth to ally himself with a woman of obscure birth; and the total disregard for money which she evinced by the encouragement to lavish expenditure which Mercedes received from her, and of which she set her the example, forbid the thought that mercenary motives could have force to conquer this bias of Such was the impression that Ladv her mind. Sylvester made on her young companion. Whether this was done involuntarily or intentionally; whether it was a true or a false one, our tale will reveal.

Mercedes on her arrival was again received by Lady Sylvester with as many demonstrations of tenderness as in the morning. She then presented her son to her with an air of proud delight, and seemed scarcely able to refrain from demanding a tribute of praise from her, even before she had heard him speak. The hour of dinner passed on agreeably; for as Mr. Wentworth had not spent an evening in the society of his mother and brother for many months, he now did so without experiencing any insupportable degree of ennui. He was not at all disappointed in the expectations which his mother had raised with regard to the beauty of her young protégée; and from the moment that he perceived the friendliness that subsisted between her and Lord Sylvester, he was seized with a desire to make her feel how immeasurably superior were his own powers of attraction to those possessed by his brother; and also to efface effectually from her mind all other candidates for her favour that had yet appeared. No spirit of emulation, however, was excited in his brother; who, on the contrary, was more than usually silent. He was secretly occupied in observing with no small curiosity the conduct of both his mother and his brother, nor did he remark with indifference the effect which it seemed likely to produce on the object of it.

Mercedes ceased to feel surprise at the maternal pride and affection of Lady Sylvester, when she became acquainted with their object. Arundel's person presented a most striking resemblance to that of his mother, who was still distinguished for her remarkable beauty. His countenance and manner were lively; his conversation, though superficial, was sparkling with ready wit, and animated by an eager desire to please. In all these respects he afforded a complete contrast to his elder brother.

Lord Sylvester was usually silent and abstracted: he could speak well on those subjects in which he was interested; on others he did not often speak He seldom expressed his opinions so as to make them evident to any but those who were of the number of his friends. He was rather slow to show either his likings or his dislikes; his manner was uniformly polite to his equals and to his inferiors: deferential only to those whose characters he approved, whose abilities he admired, or whose age he reverenced. His voice, always pleasing, was peculiarly kind and gentle when he addressed either women or children; it was not the fulsome or unmeaning language of flattery that he gave as a tribute to the former; his address was rather such as a mother or a sister would desire, and would repay with grateful affection.

To these excellent qualities Mercedes was not insensible; and she entertained a sincere friendship for Lord Sylvester, who had always treated her with marked consideration and attention; for he easily perceived that in many respects her tastes, feelings, and natural bent of mind amalgamated with his own; and could discern that her intellectual powers, though as yet little developed from want of cultivation, were of a superior order. But much as Mercedes esteemed him, she had never seen him display that brilliancy which she perceived in his brother, nor any of that vivacity to which the sprightliness of youth gives a charm almost as great as that possessed by wit; she did

not believe that his presence could diffuse the same life which that of his brother seemed so capable of imparting to any circle into which he should enter. New to the world, and a stranger to aught but prosperity, Mercedes was far too happy to be difficult to please. Lady Sylvester soon found an opportunity of ascertaining that her wishes, with regard to the opera, had been complied with and Lord Sylvester left the field entirely open to Wentworth by declining to accompany them thither.

Miss Ratcliffe had no sooner entered her box and placed herself in her usual seat, than she perceived that her cousin's party was at a little distance, and quite within sight of them. She well knew that Mrs. Johnson's heart would be overflowing with gratitude and delight, which would doubtless be expressed by "nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles;" and when she glanced Arundel at her side, she almost repented that she had placed herself in a situation of so much annovance. As soon, however, as she saw that she was recognised beyond a doubt, she summoned up all the courage she possessed, and bowed her head in acknowledgment of the many tokens of greeting which she received from them. Having thus accomplished her duty, she for the first time ventured to raise her eyes to the faces of her companions, in order to learn from their countenances. what effect the personal vulgarity and outre attire of those whom she was forced to acknowledge as relatives had upon them;—but the imperturbability of good breeding saved her from reading anything there that could add to her embarrassment.

In time, therefore, she regained her satisfaction, and listened with pleasure to the remarks of Arundel, when suddenly directing her eyes (by that strange fatality that always forces them to turn in the direction of any object of aversion) towards the party she regarded with so much dismay, she saw emerging in the back ground the head of the heir of the house of Johnson, the eldest hope of the family! From that moment her enjoyment was effectually destroyed; she was seized with the apprehension that he at least would pay her a visit, and every time the door opened, she started in expectation of hearing the loud, familiar greeting of her cousin, who she knew professed to honour her with his particular admiration. She thought too with horror of the probability of encountering them in leaving the house, of being watched and waylaid by them; she reproached berself with her weak compliance with her friend's unreasonable request, and began to see the indelicacy of it. Half disposed to be displeased. she turned abruptly to Lady Sylvester, and telling her that she had a head-ache, expressed her wish to return home as soon as the opera was concluded, without waiting for the ballet. By this arrangement she knew that her departure would far precede that of her cousin, who would have a laudable desire of deriving all possible enjoyment from the unusual means of pleasure afforded to her. Lady Sylvester, who was perfectly alive to the cause of her annoyance, saw that it would be injudicious at this moment to trifle with her feelings or to differ from her wishes, so instantly assuming a tone of affectionate interest, she expressed the utmost impatience to comply with her request, which they accordingly did.

"And this is the end of an anticipated evening of pleasure!" exclaimed Mercedes, as after leaving Lady Sylvester at her own house, she threw herself back in her carriage and experienced inexpressible relief in solitude.

On the following day, however, she found reason to rejoice that the occurrences of the past evening were no worse than they had been. At a very early hour, Mrs. Johnson and her daughters arrived, "Determined," as she said, "to find her at home and not to be disappointed of seeing her." As she uttered these words, Mercedes shrank from her embrace, and offering her a seat with as good a grace as she could assume, placed herself beside her. Mrs. Johnson, as if to detain her (though she really had no design of moving, however great might be her desire to do so) placed her large and heavy hand on her arm, and began to pour forth her thanks which were echoed by each of her cousins.

These acknowledgments, to which she listened

unwillingly, feeling that she scarcely deserved them were followed by inquiries of—"How did you get there? I am sure you might have come with us if you had liked; there was room enough for another twice your size. There was no occasion for you to go in any one's box but your own. Pray, who were you with?"

"Lady Sylvester," replied Mercedes faintly.

"Oh! one of your grand friends. Fred wanted to pay you a visit, but we told him that the box certainly must belong to the lady with you, and as he did not know her, he might as well stay where he was. Indeed, at first when I saw you so near," added Mrs. Johnson, "I had more than half a mind to drop in myself just to say a word to you, but the girls would not hear of it."

Mercedes never felt so affectionately disposed towards her cousins as on hearing of the visitation from which they had saved her. Still, after a little further conversation, she could not refrain from looking at her watch in a manner that signified that other engagements called her from them. This action being repeated, drew forth an inquiry from Mrs. Johnson as to what she was going to do with herself.

"I have ordered my carriage early to-day," said Mercedes.

"Indeed! You must often be very lonely, my dear. I am sure whenever you want a companion in a drive, one of my girls will always be happy to go with you. You don't see enough of each

other for cousins; I don't know how it is. Are you by yourself to-day?"

"No; Lady Sylvester will be with me. I shall call for her."

This reply silenced Mrs. Johnson, who now took her departure.

In fact, Mr. Ratcliffe's relations showed a wonderful anxiety to undertake the care of his mother-less child, hoping probably to participate in the advantages of her father's wealth, which he so liberally communicated to her; and they appeared to consider themselves injured and aggrieved, when he uniformly declined their proffered services, and chose to select her companions and friends in another rank from that to which she was by birth most closely allied.

Mercedes, however, found it easy to check Mrs. Johnson's vulgar importunity, but not so to resist the delicate advances of Lady Sylvester.

### CHAPTER III.

"L'homme n'est que déguisement, que mensonge, et hypocrisie, et en soi-même, et à l'égard des autres. Ainsi la vie humaine n'est qu'une illusion perpétuelle; on ne fait que s'entre-tromper et s'entre-flatter."—PASCAL.

"Your presence here, my dear Arundel," said Lady Sylvester, " far from being productive of any good consequences, can do nothing but harm. Mr. Ratcliffe has little intention of giving his beautiful daughter to the younger son of a Viscount. your brother he would not perhaps object, but I see no danger threatening in that quarter. The grounds of my fears at present are these: Mercedes never will 'unwooed be won;' and if you attempt to win her, she will be taken from us, re-instated in her father's house, and consigned to the care of some respectable relative, such as we saw last night, which would be very sad for her, poor thing, as well as for us. So this we will not provoke. Indeed, I have foreseen and prepared for all such difficulties long since."

"What an unattainable talent you have for intrigue, plot, and counterplot, dear mother," replied Arundel, who found much amusement in listening to the development of his mother's plans.

"Talleyrand might have respected you, and no doubt would have profited much by the possession of such an advantage as I have in listening to you."

"I believe it," answered Lady Sylvester complacently. "But I have much to say which shall demand still more admiration. In order to have this pretty child completely at my own disposal, I deem it absolutely necessary to remove her from under her father's eye. She loves him passionately; and I know that every night of her life, when she returns to him, she repeats every occurrence, trifling or important, of the past day. While she can do this, we have little power to go against his inclinations. Whatever you do will immediately be made known to him, and if you make the slightest progress in the young lady's affections, it will be quickly visible to his anxious eye. Therefore I advise you to go away before you have made an impression at all. I wish I could hope that she would not even mention your name to him."

"Can you suppose that all my conversational powers were exerted in vain last night? You do not estimate them properly, and you forget that she has seen me."

"Conceited creature! we women do not surrender to a handsome face as you do. We accept homage, we do not pay it. So beautiful a girl as Mercedes Ratcliffe loves to receive the tribute of admiration rather than to give it."

"But, mother, if you banish me now, when and where are we to meet again?"

"At Philippi!" replied Lady Sylvester. "Listen, and you shall hear a master-stroke of policy. I have actually, previously to your arrival, obtained from her father a consent that she shall pass the winter with me in Italy; and why should you not come out to us and do the same?"

"I will come with you, if you like; and strada facendo, I can make love more pleasantly, and with less inconvenience than at any other time."

"How can you suppose it possible that I shall allow you to leave England with us? And do not, I beg, let me ever hear again of trouble or inconvenience, when I am offering you a golden prize that half the eldest sons in England might covet. You must not prove 'a peevish school-boy, worthless of such honour.'"

"Honour!" repeated Arundel, tossing his head haughtily; "I think that the blood of the Wentworths was hardly meant to mix its current with the muddy stream that flows in the veins of a citizen's daughter."

And the colour that mounted on his cheek showed that his pride really smarted at this thought. Lady Sylvester regarded him for a moment with a smile of derision, which expression however she chose to qualify by a mixture of admiration; and then she said,

"Well, I intend to avail myself of this little ebullition of pride, which is not altogether uncon-

genial to my own temper, and shall make use of it to impress on Mercedes's mind a sense of the greatness of the honour we shall confer on her by permitting such an union, and the disinterestedness and strength of the attachment that can incline us to do so."

"Indeed, my dear mother," replied Arundel, not without a sneer, "you will be very clever, or Miss Ratcliffe very silly, if you can carry imposition to such a length. In the meantime, if I am not to stay here, I shall run down to Dovor and see my friend Norton. He is there with his sister, Mrs. Annesly Marchmont, whose husband is too ill to cross the channel. If he were to depart this life, the fair widow (whom by the bye I am very desirous to behold) would offer no bad speculation for younger sons; and you, mother, I am sure, must approve of my providing two strings to my bow."

Such was the conversation which was interrupted by the arrival of Miss Ratcliffe, according to her appointment; and Lady Sylvester despatched Arundel to invite her to enter, as she was not ready to accompany her immediately. She wished to receive her with her customary demonstration of affection, and then turning to Arundel, she said:

"You may amuse Miss Ratcliffe while I prepare to go out; and if you succeed tolerably well, I will reward you by begging her to allow you to accompany us."

So saying she left the room, leaving Arundel

disposed to obey her injunctions, and by no means distrusting his powers of doing so. But if Lady Sylvester's raillery had caused him no embarrassment, it was not so with Mercedes: she blushed deeply, and replied entirely à tort et à travers to some very trifling remark with which he com. menced the conversation. Her mind was still running on the disagreeable remembrance of the past evening, and she thought that in the eyes of Wentworth she could only appear as a citizen's daughter for whom her father's wealth had purchased a station in society which was entirely a false one, and for which the vulgarity of her associates at home must wholly disqualify her. And this was in fact the light in which Mr. Wentworth did regard her. That her own innate refinement and superior qualities of mind gave her a distinction above that which is merely conventional, Wentworth was not quick to discover as his brother had been; nor would this knowledge have won from him any feeling of respect so great as that which he was disposed to pay to her wealth. He was, it is true, rejoiced to find the two possessions of beauty and riches, those which were alone able to engage his affections, so closely united in an uncommon degree. His vanity, which he had expected to find deeply mortified by this projected alliance was, on the contrary, gratified at the idea of carrying off a prize as fitted to excite the passion of love as that of avarice. Mercedes could not but comply with Lady Sylvester's request; and

Wentworth accompanied them in their drive. In the agreeable conversation that ensued, Mercedes forgot the mortification she had experienced. Every succeeding hour seemed to strengthen Lady Sylvester's hopes of final success; but she was too wise to allow the elation of triumph to induce her to alter the plan of action which she had laid out with so much previous reflection. She would not defer Arundel's banishment a single day beyond the one originally fixed, but rigidly insisted on his departure; particularly as she was alarmed by an inquiry from Mr. Ratcliffe as to whether Arundel was to accompany them in their visit to the continent. To this she replied in the negative.

"We shall not want Arundel," she said, "for Sylvester will be with us."

She therefore eagerly dismissed Arundel, agreeing with him that they were to meet at Rome in November. She by no means desired that his rising passion should cool during the intervening months; and perceived with displeasure that he ceased to manifest his first impatience for the time to arrive when he might rejoin them. He wrote to tell her, that he designed to solace himself by accompanying the Annesly Marchmonts in a tour in the south of France, previously to entering Italy for the winter. He accordingly remained with them until they reached Florence in the autumn, where he soon received an angry and urgent letter from his mother, who desired him to reach the imperial city on the same day that

she expected to enter it. She made also many general comments on the ingratitude and imprudence of youth, and on the folly of her son in particular; but as she brought no definite accusations against him, he passed over her displeasure in silence, and proposed to appease it by setting out for Rome without any delay, where he arrived on the very day that the courier attending on Lady Sylvester's party, and paid by Mr. Ratcliffe, had established them in apartments in the palazzo—, in the vicinity of the Pincean Hill.

## CHAPTER IV.

His bosom mild, the favouring muse Had stored with all her ample views. Parent of fairest deeds, and purposes sublime.

WARTON.

It was with surprise and pleasure that Mr. Ratcliffe, a few days after he parted from his daughter, received a visit from his old friend Mr. Wilmot, whom he had not now seen for several years. They had, for a time, kept up a regular correspondence, but even this had been gradually allowed to fall to the ground, for business accumulated with each of them. The retired minister of the church found his time not less occupied by the cares of his parish than was that of his more enterprising friend by his mercantile undertakings; and they found it so little possible to convey to each other any clear comprehension of the very different interests by which they were mutually engrossed, that, as their letters grew to contain little else than assurances of a friendship of which neither had ever doubted the strength or the sincerity, they at length ceased altogether, unless any unusual event occurred which they felt desirous to communicate.

This had been the case with Mr. Ratcliffe till his daughter had quitted England, when, oppressed by a sense of loneliness, his thoughts had turned to the one true friend whom he knew he possessed, and to the tender proofs of regard which he had received from him and from his wife; and he sat down and wrote a letter to Wilmot, to which his arrival brought a most welcome answer. indeed, that it was occasioned by it; affairs that came to an unexpected crisis summoned him to town; breaking in as it did upon the even tenor of his uneventful life, this occurrence was rather productive of pleasure than of annovance. The age which his only child had attained made it necessary to select a profession for him, as the smallness of his father's means left him chiefly dependent on his own exertion; and Mr. Wilmot thought that in personal interviews with some noble and wealthy friends of former days, with whom familiar intercourse had long since ceased, he might, without any sacrifice of dignity, interest them in the fortunes of his son. He found himself not altogether disappointed in these hopes. By some of his friends he was remembered—by some forgotten; many gracious speeches were listened to, and some kind assurances believed.

It was chiefly to Mr. Ratcliffe that he looked for assistance and advice. The long cessation of intercourse between them seemed only to heighten their satisfaction in meeting again, and they passed every evening together of the short period which

Mr. Wilmot meant to spend in London. Their conversation naturally turned to the past in which they had been mutually interested, rather than to the present in which they had little connexion with each other; but they also dwelt upon the future, for they both had children. Mr. Wilmot's only son was not less precious to his heart than was the merchant's orphan daughter to that of her father. Mr. Ratcliffe eagerly inquired into the character, the prospects, and the wishes of Julian Wilmot; sincerely desiring to serve the father through the son, and to prove the liveliness of that gratitude which had never expired, and which the sight of his friend fanned into a brighter flame.

"My son," replied Mr. Wilmot to Mr. Ratcliffe's earnest inquiries, "is now nineteen. childhood I had entertained a not unnatural wish to educate him to my own profession, the exercise of which I prefer to that of any other more likely to lead to emolument and worldly distinctions; for, highly as I have been always inclined to rate Julian's abilities, so entirely are we destitute of any advantages of interest or connexion, that I believe I may honestly affirm that ambition can have little to do with the choice of this career for him. Indeed, the motives which chiefly directed my choice, were founded on my close and anxious study of my child's peculiar disposition. The gentleness and lively sensibility which are alike predominant in him, joined to a reserve and timidity existing to a painful degree when he is thrown among strangers, but which give place to the most ingenuous candour and the utmost affectionate willingness to confide every thought and feeling when with those he loves, make me think him little suited to wrestle with the world where he would find himself.

"Checked by the scoff of pride and envy's frown, And poverty's unconquerable bar."

How often has the character drawn by the poet whom I quote, reminded his mother and me most forcibly of our child!

"I also narrowly observed him in order to detect from whence sprung the excessive ardour with which he pursued the different studies to which I directed him, having myself been his sole preceptor. I decided that it arose more from the enthusiasm of his nature, and the harmony that existed between his spirit and those master-minds whose imperishable works formed his objects of study, than from the yearnings of emulous ambition. In all these pursuits it was rather the present enjoyment than the future hope, that incited his indefatigable efforts. I have now discovered that an ardent thirst of fame is in his heart, but seeks its gratification by other means.

"From his very childhood, my son has displayed a most remarkable passion, I may say genius, for painting. The delight he took in nature, and the faithfulness of the attempts he made to portray her features, excited the observation of every one around us; and such as could assist him in the cultivation of this talent, most kindly did so. Before long this passion, for in him it is nothing less, began to supersede all other studies. The poets and historians which I placed in his hands, soon bore on every blank leaf and margin, the illustration of each lively image or affecting scene that struck his fancy; and I would often reprove what nevertheless excited my admiration. Every page of the Iliad in his possession would corroborate what I am saying. There we have Achilles in the council of heroes, restrained from striking Agamemnon by the interference of Minerva, who places her hand in the hair of the impetuous warrior and draws him back. We see him again weeping bitterly on the sea-shore, with his beautiful mother rising from the waves to console her son. Often on his mother's birthday will he present her with portfolios enriched with the most exquisitely graceful designs, which are however but the fruits of his idle hours.

"Among these, his subjects are chiefly selected from Shakspeare, whom he knows to be equally their favourite. One of those, at this moment present to my mind, is a design for a frontispiece to the 'Two Gentlemen of Verona,' which is composed of a number of small sketches, divided from each other by elegant wreaths of flowers and ornamental scrolls, and which united present an epitome of the whole play. The first is the embarkation of Valentine; the second is the leave-taking of Julia and Proteus; the two lower ones

are Silvia returning to Valentine the verses she had engaged him to write, and Silvia in the balcony reproaching Proteus, who is attended by the love-sick Julia; while the centre represents the final scene in the wood, where Valentine proffers the hand of Silvia to his friend, whose attention is distracted by the fainting Julia at his side.

"Forgive me for dwelling thus on minute details which to you can possess little interest. That such manifestations of genius were viewed with fond partiality by his parents, you will easily believe; and he has found his friends equally disposed to admire. Lord Camville, who resides near us and is a man of much taste and knowledge, has, by opening to him his extensive gallery, afforded him an unhoped-for advantage in the pursuit of the study of his art.

"Perhaps it will scarcely surprise you to hear that when about a year back I offered to send him to the university, he declined to avail himself of my proposal, declaring that the attendant expense would be very ill-advised, as he never intended to practise any profession that called for such an education; that he felt that his sole vocation was that of a painter, and on no other could he willingly enter. This avowal at first certainly caused me some pain; but Julian, not less firm than he is gentle, finally obtained my consent to make his own decision. I expected that his mother would have been even more averse than myself to allow a resolution to be carried into effect which, in the

eyes of the many, would we knew be considered to place our son below the station which I had intended him to hold. But here I found her disposed to adopt Julian's opinions, and to abide by his wishes. He boldly asserted that he held it to be no degradation to make those talents which are especial and unattainable gifts of Heaven, the means of procuring an honest competence. what profession,' he asked, 'can a subsistence be earned more honourably than in that which I have chosen? Is it not free from the many temptations to dishonesty which beset those considered to hold a higher rank? The lawyer may be tempted, for the sake of gain, to uphold by specious reasoning the wrong against the right, and to foster the malignance of human passions. The soldier may be paid to draw his sword in a cause which his heart abhors; and some will intrude even into the Church's holy sanctuary, who seek only the loaves and the fishes. I must stand or fall by my own merits, protected and sought only by those who approve me.'

"If such be his determination, it is time that he put it into execution; and I see plainly that he passionately desires to fly to the land of painters, where they have attained most excellence, earned most fame, been best loved, and most esteemed. Julian, who had not displayed any symptoms of ambition before, looks to his art with an ardent desire for distinction."

"And let him earn it!" exclaimed Mr. Rat-

cliffe, who had heard with interest his friend's narrative. "Let us assist him to earn it," and before their conversation came to a close, he proposed with equal generosity and delicacy that Mr. Wilmot should immediately summon his son to join him in London, bringing with him such specimens of his powers as were yet in being, which he would undertake to submit to competent judges. Mr. Ratcliffe went on to propose, that according to their advice his present routine should be marked out, and that if a course of study in Italy were most desirable, it should be afforded him at his expense.

With this liberal proposal, after some scruples of delicacy, and with the expression of the warmest gratitude, Mr. Wilmot was induced to reply; and accordingly wrote to his son to inform him of it. Julian obeyed with alacrity injunctions that promised so well for his future career; it had long been his eager desire to meet with an opening such as might authorize him to entertain any rational hopes of final success. The ardour of his feelings on this point vanquished the repugnance which he had to receive benefits in general, and his mother reminded him that the friendship which existed between his father and the wealthy merchant had hitherto been supported by mutual services, and that if the balance of gratitude was now on their side, his well-founded anticipations of success might enable him ere long to make that return to his generous patron which was probably the one that would be most really acceptable to him.

The reception which Julian met with from Mr. Ratcliffe, the kindness and almost parental interest which he showed him, reassured him at once and excited in his affectionate nature the warmest feelings of gratitude; and the circumstance of his father being there to support him, prevented his delicacy and his self-respect from receiving, or fancying that they received any wound.

Mr. Ratcliffe was indeed thoughtfully considerate on every subject, however triffing, that could affect the interest or the feelings of his young protégé. He was singularly pleased with his whole demeanour, with his handsome and intelligent countenance, his unstudied eloquence springing from the heart, his ingenuousness and simplicity, and the earnestness and yet manly dignity with which he acknowledged a sense of obligation to his favours. He sought, not less for his own satisfaction than for that of the young artist and his father, the opinions of all those whom he considered most competent to advise him before the important decision was finally made; and he found himself fully corroborated in the opinion he had formed, that the passionate desire of the youthful painter evinced to make the exercise of his favourite art the chief occupation of his life was not founded on any false estimation of his latent powers, but was the voice of genius that would be heard, and an indication of the existence of those powers which are the gift of heaven, not the acquisition of the most indefatigable of the sons of men.

After Julian had spent a few weeks beneath his roof, and afforded him the fullest satisfaction, both as the son of his friend and with regard to a hope of future success, Mr. Ratcliffe most liberally provided him with the means of spending the following winter in Italy, and in order to forward his interests in every way in his power, he gave him letters to his daughter in which he strongly recommended him to Lord Sylvester, whose generous disposition and cultivated taste would, he thought, render him able and willing to be of essential service to the young painter, as inexpenenced in the world as he was at present in his art.

Julian returned with his father to his home to bid his mother farewell, and with a truly grateful heart, took leave of his patron.

## CHAPTER V.

Le nom seul de Rome est magique pour le voyageur qui arrive dans son enceinte! Etre à Rome paraît une sorte d'honneur, un des nobles évènemens, un des futurs et grands souvenirs de notre vie.

Si Rome est le premier but du voyageur en Italie, St. Pierre est la première merveille qu'il recherche, et que ses yeux contemplent.

VALÉBY.

"WE are in Rome!" exclaimed Mercedes. "What joy! Dear Lady Sylvester, do not you feel happy, happier than you ever felt before? Do not you say with the poet—

"I am in Rome! I cry
Whence this excess of joy? What has befall'n me?
And from within a thrilling voice replies:
Thou art in Rome! A thousand busy thoughts
Rush on my mind! A thousand images;
And I spring up, as girt to run a race."

Lord Sylvester smiled at her ecstasy—he was turning over the leaves of a book he had been reading, as if in search of some particular passage, and when he found it, he pointed out the page to Mercedes, and bid her read it:—

"Chiunque abbia alquanto gustato le delizie dell'antica erudizione mi farà testimonianza quai papiti sente il cuore, allorchè scendendo l'Appennino la via declina alla celebrata città. Le pupille sono intente a scoprire la sommità dei sette colli; il petto brama lanciarsi tra preziosi monumenti; ogni pietra di antico edifizio per la via è materia di dotte congiutture e d'immagini deliziose."\*

"How true!" said Mercedes, as she ended: "but still, though this passage describes my feelings so exactly, the cause that it assigns for them is more peculiarly felt by you. Perhaps my chief associations and desires are rather attached neither to ancient nor yet to modern Italy, but to Italy of the middle ages. It is the Italy of the poets and the painters that I love with an almost personal affection. The Italy of Raphael and of Michael Angelo; and now that I know them, many other names are become dear to me that never reached my ears before I came here; those, for instance, of Masaccio, of Cimabue, of Pinturiccio, of Perugino, of Garofolo, and others too many to enumerate; while the very air of Italy inspires me with more vivid reminiscences of Dante, of Petrarca, of Ariosto, and I long to see where Tasso died, and read his name on his humble grave-stone with deeper feelings of tenderness and veneration than, I think, the stately monument of later days that honours Santa Croce can awake."

"Well," replied Lord Sylvester, "you must banish for a while these charming reveries, but only in order to realize them. Are you calm enough to fix on any single object that you desire to see?"

"Oh yes!" exclaimed Mercedes eagerly; then pausing, she more thoughtfully continued: "St. Peter's, the Coliseum, that grand monument of Rome itself!"

"A thousand images" did indeed rush into her mind, and she was lost among them.

"Let us go to St. Peter's," said Lady Sylvester. Arundel, who was with them, did not offer to accompany them; but after a short silence, he said with an air which was not quite so unembarrassed as it was designed to be:

"I will not undertake to be your cicerone, mother. Sylvester, who has been here before will do all that better; much more to your satisfaction and to Miss Racliffe's. You see how my modesty and anxiety for your true interests lead me to make a great sacrifice. I, however, must also be employed in your service, though in a different way. I will get you a carriage and horses if you please; I am admirably qualified to select them; and before we meet at dinner, I will be en état to tell vou every one who is in Rome: every thing that is likely to happen during the ensuing week; your names shall be properly inscribed in Monaldini's book, and to-morrow every acquaintance that you have here shall be made aware of the momentous fact of your arrival."

Mercedes was far too much absorbed in the idea that a few short hours would place her within St. Peter's to listen to the whole of Arundel's speech; she was rather astonished that he should willingly defer so great a pleasure, but too much occupied in the anticipation of it, to perceive all the annoyance which his mother felt, or to share greatly in it herself.

Mercedes threw herself back in the carriage determined to reserve all her emotions that day for St. Peter's. Her companions seemed by their mere presence to disturb her; she resolutely maintained silence, and refused to allow her attention to be attracted by any of the new and passing objects around her.

As soon as they found themselves on the Bridge of St. Angelo, she leaned forward at Lord Sylvester's instigation, to catch perhaps the most excellent view of the majestic dome that is to be had within the city. She gazed silently on the gracefully swelling outline, relieved by the deep and cloudless blue sky, and felt her expectations rising even to a painful degree. The moment that they intered the Piazza, she started up in the carriage, ager to behold the first revealed view of the icade; but as soon as she had perceived it, she urned to Lord Sylvester with a blank look of isappointment.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, "where is the dome at looked so sublime a few minutes ago? Now have entirely lost sight of it. That ugly pile," she said, pointing to the Vatican, "looks as if it had overbearingly crushed it!"

"True," replied Lord Sylvester; "your dissatisfaction is very just. It cannot be denied that, 'le premier temple de l'Europe se trouve avoir le caractère trivial d'un bâtiment d'habitation.' But look now on this beautiful colonnade; these fountains that play so gracefully; that obelisk that aspires to heaven! You must acknowledge that it is, as has been justly remarked, 'the finest inclosure to the Piazza that could be imagined, and also a most fortunate screen to the ignoble objects that surround it. How many noble buildings stand in need of such a screen! See how vast is the area inclosed by these encircling arms! and how admirable the proportions of the colonnade itself!"

Lady Sylvester and Mercedes participated in his just admiration; but the latter was too anxious to behold the interior to bestow her full attention on that which was without She sprang from the carriage, and ran up the broad stone steps; she was struck with the grandeur of the vestibule which she now entered, and as Lord Sylvester raised the heavy curtain that impeded her entrance, she passed beneath it, and stood within the august temple.

"How proud a fabric to devotion given!"

When she thus first entered St. Peter's, she was overwhelmed with a sense of its surpassing grandeur; oppressed by, and lost in a vague perception of its vastness. How ardent a wish she felt to be there alone, at least undisturbed and un-

restrained by the presence of companions, in order to contemplate it in silence. She felt a desire to abide there to gaze on its awful majesty from sunrise to sunset, to watch every changing effect, from the brightening of day to the shadows of evening and the gloom of night! She regarded it as the most sublime temple that man could hope to frame; and she could have wept to think that we have been forced to turn away from the ancient Church, its mistress, because, blind and deaf, corrupted and bigoted, she refused to "wash and be dean," when the accumulated errors of ages were plainly proved, and held up before her eyes.

Lord Sylvester left her for a time to herself, but he could not long deny himself the pleasure of inquiring into her sentiments, and the emotions excited by the glorious spectacle before her. was not, however, possible for her to express, scarcely to define her feelings so immediately. They seemed like a weight on her mind; she felt crushed and yet exalted by the immensity of what she beheld. She afterwards remarked how truly these words of a well-known author described what her own sensations had been on her first visit to St. Peters:—"The cupola is glorious, viewed in its design, its altitude, and its decoration; it enchants the eye, it satisfies the taste, it expands the soul! The very air seems to eat up all that is harsh or colossal, and to leave us nothing but the sublime to feast on—a sublime peculiar as the genius of the immortal architect, and comprehensible only on the spot."

Lady Sylvester, however, wearied of the indulgence of these almost speechless raptures, proposed to take a regular survey of the church, and they then remarked that the side aisles appeared very insignificant compared with the middle one; so that, in fact, they almost looked on them as passages to the different chapels.

"Show me the tomb of the last of the Stuarts," said Mercedes, as their conductor led them on. and they stopped before a monument hewn from the purest, the most colourless marble. A weeping angel guarded the tomb on either side; they hung their graceful heads, hopelessly dejected. these the guardian angels who had been commissioned to watch over the fortunes of that princely family as long as a single scion of its race remained on earth? If so, how many hours of anguish had they witnessed; of woes that they might not relieve, and tears that they were not commissioned to dry! 'Had they hovered over the repentant Mary in her lonely prison, and rejoiced over every remorseful sigh that she heaved? they seen her lovely head upon the block, and borne her released soul on their wings to heaven? Had they conducted the children of the saintly Charles to his bosom for the last time? And had they hidden their faces in shame and sorrow at the guilt of succeeding generations, or with downcast eyes and burning blushes of indignation on their brow, watched, without attempting to avert, the avenging bolt of heaven? And now, when justice was satisfied, were they there to shed

tears of pity, unmixed with any sterner feeling? Their extinguished torches, and those closed doors told that hope was expelled. No mighty efforts could bring back past grandeur; there was no strong arm to be raised for victory;—for the Stuarts' time was at an end!

Such were the thoughts awakened in Mercedes' mind as she gazed on this most affecting tribute to a fallen race. But she did not give them utterance; tears gathered slowly in her eyes, and at last she turned mournfully away, for her companions were in haste to proceed. They soon afterwards crossed the church to view that which. as a monument, is perhaps Canova's capo d'opera, the Rezzonico tomb. The superb representation of the most superb animal of the creation; the fervent piety expressed in the countenance of the kneeling pontiff, and denoted by the unaffected humility of his posture; the touching grace of the recumbent angel; all excite the warmest admiration. The sublime fails only where it should come forth in greatest majesty—in the figure of triumphant religion.

Mercedes was charmed beyond expression by the languid grace and pathetic loveliness of the reclining figure of the Angel of Death. As they walked away, she said to Lord Sylvester:

"That figure reminds me so strongly of a little German fable that I once read, and which perhaps Canova had read also. It represents the Angel of Death in company with all the ministering spirits who are supposed to go to and fro upon the earth. He is lamenting that the melancholy office which is intrusted to him, renders him an object of hatre instead of love, among men; while, nevertheless he is the instrument of the greatest blessing the receive. Think of the horrible and ghastly representation of him as the King of Terrors, the haunts the imagination of the vulgar, and of the lovely and, I hope, far more true personification him that we have just seen. Is it not the same thought embodied?"

They did not in one visit exhaust nor evglance over the innumerable treasures of St. Peter nor do I intend to enumerate them. I would on wish, in these pages, to mention some of tha matchless works that Rome contains, inconceiva to all who have not viewed them, and even the not to be conceived aright in the true amount their grandeur and beauty by any who are ungift with "that secret harmonious spirit," that is necsary to form an alliance between "the reader o= book, the spectator of a statue," and him who p duced it. This I do, not with the presumptuc idea that I can pay a tribute worthy of them. with the hope that by describing the sensatic which they excited in the persons to whom t3 tale relates, I may make known their characte their tastes, feelings, and sentiments, in a way the shall invest their future fortunes with some interin the eves of my readers, if any such there shall & On the present subject, suffice it now to sa that our party quitted it with a ready concurrence in the sentiment of the traveller, who says that one of the chief causes of regret in departing from Rome, arises from the thought of never again entering St. Peter's.

On their return home, Lady Sylvester went in search of her son. She found him alone stretched on a sofa, and closing the door behind her, she advanced with a step and a look that seemed to alarm him, for he started up as she drew near. Addressing him in a voice of suppressed anger, she said:

"Do not suppose that I am not perfectly aware of the reason why you would not accompany us to-day. You were seeking apartments for the Annesly Marchmonts."

"Well, dear mother," said Arundel, attempting to laugh away her displeasure, "you would not have me backward in serving a friend?"

Without regarding his idle words, Lady Sylvester continued, with a fierceness very unlike the soft, becoming graciousness of manner for which she was remarkable in those more guarded hours, when "caution watched beside the lips of fraud:" Have you dared to resolve to frustrate my plans?"

"Nothing can be farther from my intention," replied Arundel, with a coolness that was meant to make his mother feel that her violence was ridiculous. She looked at him with doubt and incredulity; after a moment's silence, she added:

"See that you abide by those words," and walked out of the room.

## CHAPTER VI.

The fair fulfilment of his poesy,

When his young heart first yearned for sympathy.

COLERIDGE.

Sweetness, truth and every grace, That time and use are wont to teach The eye may in a moment reach, And read distinctly on her face.

WALLER.

- "DEAR Lady Sylvester," said Mercedes, as she finished reading to her the letter from her father which the painter, Wilmot, had left at her door; "we must not neglect this protégé of my father's. What can we do for him? Let me send him a card for your Friday evenings."
  - "By all means, my love, if you wish it."
- "And when we go out to-day, why should we not visit his studio?"
- "Just as you please, my dear; but Sylvester cannot come with us to-day," replied Lady Sylvester.

Nevertheless, Mercedes, who had been greatly touched by her father's letter, in which he reminded her of all that this young man's mother had done for them, and the strict friendship that had so long existed between him and his father,

did not neglect to direct the servant to go to the Palazzetto —, in which Wilmot had taken up On inquiring whether an English painter resided there, and in what part of the spacious building, the porter assured them, with an expressive shrug, that it was "in cielo," and it would cost them much pains to attain to it. cedes however was not easily to be discouraged when her heart was set on any object, and springing lightly from the carriage, she ran up the long fights of stone stairs with a rapidity which left Lady Sylvester far behind. At length she appeared to have reached the very top, and stopping at a door she paused, and looking round perceived that she had outstripped the breathless lacché who toiled after her in vain. Hearing his step behind her, she raised her hand and knocked at the door for admission. It was almost instantly unclosed, and it was the painter himself that opened it. dew back abashed, for she saw him start apparently with surprise, and asked, not without blushes mantling on her cheek, if Mr. Wilmot was there.

"I am he," replied the young artist.

"And I." said Mercedes, "am Miss Ratcliffe."

Scarcely was this little explanation completed when Lady Sylvester reached them, and they entered together into the painter's studio. walls around were fastened innumerable sketches and designs: Roman women, with their pale, Proud faces; fierce-looking men, that might have been heroes, and were only brigands; merry, play-VOL. I.

ful children with the warm complexions of the south, and laughing eyes that boded uncontrollable mischief. There seemed to Mercedes to be in every thing that came from the young painter's hand a deep feeling and sentiment, that imparted interest to the merest sketch, and his countenance beamed with satisfaction as he saw how his meaning was always understood and appreciated by her. At last, they approached the easel from which he had risen. He would have removed the painting which was upon it, saying:

"It is only a trifling thought that just occurred to me, and which I may execute in some day to come."

"Oh, leave it!" exclaimed Mercedes; "perhaps if we see it now, we may offer some valuable suggestion," and she drew near with a smile.

"It is from the opening of the first book of Dante," said Julian in explanation. "Do you remember the supplication of Beatrice to Virgil to go to the assistance of her lover? After all she has said, as she departs, she feels as if she had not yet been earnest enough, and she turns back her head to cast on him one more look of the utmost entreaty. The shadowy form of Virgil," he continued, "is not meant to be the chief object of interest; but this idea of Beatrice is quite inadequate to tell my conception of her, both as to beauty and expression;" and taking up his pencil as he spoke, he effaced in a moment a face which, for pathos and loveliness, had spoken to the heart of Mercedes.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, in a voice of indignant

regret, "what have you done? Rather than destroy what had so much beauty, you might have given it to those who would have valued it;" and she looked up reproachfully, but Julian only smiled, and laid down the brush with which he had perpetrated the offence.

The ladies now prepared to depart, but not without Mercedes reminding Lady Sylvester of the invitation which she had asked for Wilmot. The young painter bowed gratefully. He had, indeed, on his arrival in Rome formed a plan of the most entire seclusion and strictest devotion to his studies; but now, he no sooner heard these words from Lady Sylvester's lips, than he looked forward to the day on which he might avail himself of the privilege they conferred, with the utmost eagerness.

Though they desired to cause him no farther interruption, he attended them to their carriage, and remounted the stairs slowly and pensively. As he re-entered his now solitary chamber, it seemed to him as if the light of heaven had suddenly been excluded from it, and all was immersed in profound gloom. He approached his easel thoughtfully, and seating himself at it, took up the sketch of Beatrice; he continued to work apparently entirely engrossed in his labour. He did not move till the shades of evening closed around him; and then rising slowly, and moving to a distance, surveying his work as he retreated, he exclaimed with a sigh of dissatisfaction:

"Oh! how unworthy a representation of so much beauty!"

Repeatedly in the course of the evening would he start up, and throwing aside the book which he was endeavouring to read, he would return to gaze on his painting, surveying it in every possible light, now closely scrutinizing it, and then regarding it from a distance, and always quitting it with an air of discontent. Finally, he carried it with him to his chamber, and hung it on the wall where it could not fail to be the first thing to greet his eye in the morning, and then retired to rest.

## CHAPTER VII.

In quella parte dov' Amor mi sprona!—
Sol una donna veggio, e'l suo bel viso!

PETRARCA.

JULIAN looked forward to the day on which he was to see Mercedes again with anxiety; but as nearly a week must elapse before it could arrive, he was forced, however unwillingly, to possess his mind with patience. Neglecting his usual studies, he wandered to every place where he thought he was likely to see her, but without success; and returned daily more dejected, and dissatisfied with himself for the folly of which he was guilty.

Mercedes, in the meantime, had not forgotten him. So much had she been delighted by the productions of his genius, that, on her return home, she had mentioned them in the most enthusiastic terms of praise to Lord Sylvester, hoping to do an important service to the young painter by inducing him to visit him himself; for she knew that this nobleman's love of the fine arts inclined him to be a liberal patron; and his highly cultivated taste qualified him to be a judicious encourager of talent wherever he discovered it.

In compliance with the earnest requests of Mercedes, Lord Sylvester accordingly called one

morning on Wilmot, who on his return, for he was now usually absent, found his card. The first thought that occurred to him was an apprehension that Lord Sylvester might perhaps have been accompanied by his mother and Mercedes; and he flew down stairs to ascertain from the porter whether there was truth in this idea. The man however assured him that no one had inquired for him that day (for Julian was at present unknown and unsought) except the Milor Inglese whose card he had delivered. Relieved from his fears, and yet rather disappointed on finding them groundless, he slowly retraced his steps.

Nor was this the only anxiety awakened by Lord Sylvester's visit. Julian speedily came to a decision in his own mind, that the affection of the son was the link that united Lady Sylvester and Mercedes. Was it possible that any one could dwell with her, be constantly beside her, exposed to the fascination of her beauty, and still more powerful influence of her voice and manner, growing every day better acquainted with the charms of "the soul that looked from such a face," and remain indifferent? Could he hope or believe that to be possible? From that day he set down Lord Sylvester as the favoured, probably the accepted lover of Miss Ratcliffe; for if she did not favour him, would he have been there?

This conclusion, in spite of self-reproof, did not dispose his mind favourably towards Lord Sylvester.

Lord Sylvester, however, little aware of the dis-

turbance he had occasioned the object of his intended kindness returned again the following day, and met Wilmot at the door of his apartment about to quit it, who could do no less than offer to return with him. Lord Sylvester had a real desire to serve him in order to oblige Mr. Ratcliffe whose protégé be understood him to be, and also feeling pleased and interested by the fine intellectual countenance of the youthful painter, readily accepted his offer.

Julian, for his part, would gladly have heard it refused; he was as yet little habituated to the display of his works with a hope of profit; and this alone threw a kind of proud humility into his manner, while an additional embarrassment was imparted to it by the thoughts which he had allowed to fill his mind. Such, however, was the refinement of good breeding, the delicacy of perception, and the liberality of sentiment that always pervaded every word and action of Lord Sylvester, however trifling, that it was impossible that Julian should remain insensible to the charm of his manner. He found himself ere long engaged with him in a conversation full of interest; and when they parted, it was not without mutual expressions of interest and gratitude.

The following evening Julian went to Lady Sylvester's soirée. Impatience led him there at an early hour; yet he found the room crowded already with guests of all nations. Lady Sylvester was very much pronée by the fashionable world in Rome at that time.

Few of the annual festivities of the brief period

there allotted to amusement had commenced: hers was one of the few salons yet open, and consequently all idlers eagerly flocked to it to see and to be seen, to reconnoitre and to speculate on the future prospects of the season. The assemblage there that night might have afforded ample scope for observation and amusement to any one who came with a less definite object than Julian. It was not unhonoured by the presence of a cardinal, nor ungraced by that of a fair ambassadress; it was attended by the usual sprinkling of the inferior satellites of church and state, such as young charges d'affaires to whose empty brains no one would have been sufficiently imprudent to commit any charge, save that of public affairs; private secretaries of a rusty, mysterious, and inky appearance; and Monsignori. Here was one looking so handsome, so interesting. so dignified, and so worthy to employ the pencil of a Titian to portray the mild benevolence of his full dark eye, the bland sweetness of his smile, the noble expanse of forehead, and the raven curls that fell gracefully around it; how suitable appears his unpretending dress of black, with the floating length of silk that falls from his shoulders almost to his feet, and warns you of his approach by its gentle rustling. There you beheld another, whose whole demeanour is full of subtlety and meanness: how stealthy are all his movements, how insidious the expression of his countenance and the tone of his voice! A third betrays, by the portly dimensions of his person, and the gross denseness of his faculties, his system of self-indulgence and uninterrupted

Here too were sad and sihabits of indolence. Lent Italians who might have verified the assertions of Niebuhr, founded on observations made while he lived among them :-- "The Italians are walking dead men: intellect and knowledge, any idea which makes the heart throb, all generous activity, is banished from among them; all hope, all aspiration, all effort, even all cheerfulness, for I have never They make a resiseen a more cheerless nation. dent here quite sad; no improvement is possible, so profound is their degradation; total prostration without pain, and without the desire of anything better. There is no possibility of making any association of community of intellect and feeling with them. There is no object of knowledge, or of business to be the medium of intercourse."

But there were also many of their countrymen, (fortunately not belonging to the haute noblesse, for then their every faculty would have been numbed and paralysed), who were poets, antiquarians, painters, musicians; who proved that the society of Romans can still furnish wit, intelligence, learning, and talent, and every quality that can impart brilliancy and interest to conversation. Among these were intermingled heavy Belgians, well-informed agreeable Germans, lively Frenchmen, and of course all the English in Rome to whom Lady Sylvester chose to accord invitations.

But for all that was around him, Julian had neither eyes nor ears, so anxious was he to discover Mercedes. She was not beside Lady Sylvester,

who received him graciously when he entered; and he advanced with difficulty into an inner room in the belief that she must be there; nor was he disappointed, for he immediately perceived her seated on a couch beside which Lord Sylvester The bitterness with which he was standing. viewed this sight, caused him at first to turn away; but he quickly directed his gaze again to the object that so fascinated him; and then he perceived that there was beside her one who was a stranger to him, many years younger than Lord Sylvester, and very much handsomer, on whom her attention was chiefly bestowed, and who addressed himself solely to her while Lord Sylvester seemed to observe them closely, but stood aloof in silence. The mild expression of Mercedes' face, 'so bland and beautiful,' which it had worn when first he beheld her, was changed as she listened to her companion to one of brilliant animation; the colour had mounted on her cheek which was dimpled with smiles; the ringlets of her dark-brown hair contrasted well with the snowy whiteness of the throat and neck on which they fell.

Julian, though not near enough to her to catch the accents of that voice, to him 'musical as is Apollo's lyre,' yet watched her moving lips, and strove to read the meaning of the words they uttered in the changing expressions of her eloquent countenance,

So unconcerned herself, and he so much! What art is this, that with so little pains, Transports him thus, and o'er his spirit reigns?

WALLER.

Thus employed, he was almost unconscious where he was, when, casting an envious glance on him whom she addressed, he found that he had attracted his notice, which was expressed by a haughty stare. Julian turned aside in involuntary embarrassment, and moved to a distance.

"Surely," said Miss Ratcliffe looking after him, "that is Mr. Wilmot. I hope he knows some of these people," she added to Lord Sylvester, who, on this remark, quitted his post and went to seek him.

Julian at first felt an inclination at once to leave the room, and return to his own solitary chamber; but as he moved on, his progress was perpetually arrested by those he encountered; and feeling a hand placed on his shoulder, he turned, and perceived Lord Sylvester.

"Whither so fast, my good friend?" he said, kindly; "you are not tired of us yet surely. Are you become so devoted a student as to refuse to spare any time to relaxation? That is not wise; it was not so with painters of yore. If you live in solitude, you will make 'wit with musing weak, heart sick with thought.' It is in society that you will meet with such materials for improvement as are to be found in the study of a face like that.

L'occasion est belle : il nous la faut chérir."

Julian started, for he thought this allusion must be made to Mercedes: but following the

direction of Lord Sylvester's eyes, he perceived that they rested on a beautiful woman, apparently English, lovely indeed but not Mercedes. complexion was of the most brilliant fairness, while on her cheek was a bloom too delicate not to be evanescent; her pale golden hair was braided round her classic head; her features were of the most faultless regularity; but not even her large, deep blue eyes, could redeem her countenance from the charge of listless inanimation, and cold insensibility. It did not even possess the charm of placidity; for the curl of her lip betrayed an ungentle temper, and haughty discontent lurked in the lines around her mouth. But as Julian observed the elegance of her symmetrical figure, her swan-like throat, her beautiful hands and arms, and the exquisite grace of every movement, he was forced to acknowledge that though her beauty could never have spoken to his heart as did that of Mercedes, still she well deserved the homage of the busy throng around her.

With some feeling of awakened curiosity, he began to scrutinize the crowd of her admirers. A lively Frenchman, whose toilette had been most sedulously soignée, and whose handsome person recompensed his labours, was buzzing near striving to engage her ear; but she only rolled her blue eyes languidly upon him when he succeeded in his attempt. A silent Italian stood at a little distance, his large, dark, and melancholy eyes fixed immoveably upon her, with an expression of the

most fervent admiration. She only recognized his presence by occasionally varying her attitude for one of new grace. A countryman of his, who had unfortunately acquired all the frivolity of the Frenchman, but was without his savoir faire, and with all his légèreté, possessed little of his wit; whose sole employment was to run over incessantly all the common-places on his country, (il bel cielo, le belle arti, &c.,) which he thought would with foreigners suffice to hold the place of conversation, to every beautiful stranger to whom he could obtain an introduction, following this up by an offer of his opera box for the evening, and himself as a cicerone for the morning; repeating with loud self-applause all the jests which he had already so often proffered to English ears, and after uttering a few unintelligible sounds. congratulating himself with the utmost complacency on the proficiency he was so fast acquiring in the language, was another claimant to her fayour. She extended it to him so far as to allow him to perform every possible service for her that he was able to execute.

Near the lady was a Spanish noble, diminutive in person, but not without dignity. On his brow was stamped all the pride of Castile. He was a preux chevalier; and his fiery spirit flashed from his glittering black eye. Brave as he was proud, and preferring honour to any other possession, he had sacrificed all in the cause he had espoused, and interested all those who could share

in his romantic generosity. But the sight of Mercedes seemed to free him from the thraldom of her beautiful countrywoman. Perhaps her dark and eloquent eyes, her almost colourless skin and peculiar style of beauty, revealed to him that a kindred blood was flowing in her veins. approached Lady Sylvester, and begged to be presented to her lovely protégée. She smilingly acquiesced; and Julian, who became a still more narrow observer of the changing scene, saw to his surprise the young Englishman, who had hitherto maintained his post at Mercedes' side, relinquish it with an alacrity that showed anything but unwillingness, and place himself beside the lady we have described, by whom he was received with smiles such as had not yet been lavished on any who had approached her.

Julian witnessed such a proceeding with so much astonishment, that he looked around with a desire of finding some one that could gratify his curiosity by telling the names of some of the persons who had been the objects of his observations. Not far from him, he perceived a brother artist of the name of Raymond, with whom he had some acquaintance; one who had been long established in Rome, and who met with a ready reception in every salon. Wilmot approached him, and began a conversation in which he found that his friend was perfectly au courant of all that was going on around them, and quite as communicative as he could desire. In reply to the inquiry he made as

to the name of the lady who had attracted his attracted, Raymond exclaimed:

"That lady? Dear me, where have you conealed yourself since you have been in Rome? From the light of day, I should think! Not to know her does indeed argue yourself unknown, She is Mrs. Annesly Marchmont; beautiful creature, indeed; incomparable, is she not? Only see her move; there, now she turns her head. Look at her contour; exquisite, is it not? She did me the honour of sitting for her picture last year; and this year, Macdonald is executing her bust. Her hands and her feet you may see in -'s studio; the prettiest things he has there, in my opinion. The gentleman beside her, Lady Sylvester's son, Mr. Wentworth; (the present Viscount, you know of course, is not her son), he is to marry the great city heiress who travels with them, and who was found out on purpose for him. At least so say they who duly appreciate her Ladyship's talents for those arrangements. Don't you think that Miss Ratcliffe might remark rather too much devotion in his manner to the most formidable rival of her claims to supremacy in beauty that she will find? There, that is Miss Ratcliffe yonder; she does not seem to be thinking of her truant lover, but rather of the handsome Spaniard at her side, the Marques de Florida. All his estates are confiscated! I dare say a few hundred thousand pounds would be acceptable to him; and he would probably as soon live in merry England,

as dance attendance here on one whom he may call his sovereign if he please, but who, he must know full well, will never win or wear a crown. I am not sure that I approve Mr. Wentworth's taste in preferring the fair beauty to the darker one. See what feeling there is in her eye, and what intellect on her brow; and what an air of dignity combined with so much sweetness.—What! you do not agree with me? Well, numbers are at present on the side of her fair antagonist, certainly."

Julian shrank from hearing another expatiate on the charms of Mercedes; and was not sorry to find his silence interpreted as difference of opinion. He moved as much away as he could from his loquacious companion, of whom he was weary; and turning his attention to Mercedes, strove to discover whether the absence of Mr. Wentworth, and his assiduity elsewhere, caused her a pang. He fancied that he could perceive her eyes not unfrequently directed to the spot on which he stood. and the animation of her manner diminished. Enough—the truth of Raymond's assertion was established, and he hastily sought to quit the room. for he felt a sensation of suffocation suddenly overpower him. Before he could effect his retreat. Lord Sylvester again sought, and again stopped him.

"We want you to go with us to-morrow to see some pictures for which we have a private order," he said. "Be with us about twelve. If you can spare the time, I think you will not afterwards regret that you have done so." Julian thus taken by surprise, silently bowed his thanks and acquiescence, and departed.

And now the evening to which he had looked forward with so much desire, the prospect of which had made so many days hang so heavily on his hands, was over; and how had it passed? He had not even approached her; not even proffered to her the common forms of salutation; not even heard the melody of her voice, though only in accents addressed to others. Nor was this all; he had learned that her hand was engaged;—this he had anticipated;—but it was not even to him whom he had been constrained to allow worthy to possess it, but to one who appeared lightly to prize the treasure bestowed on him.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Treading their path in sympathy, and linked In social converse. One spirit seldom failed to extend its sway Over both minds.

WORDSWORTH.

"I never spoke to you last night, Mr. Wilmot. Was the crowd too formidable to permit you to reach me? I wanted to talk to you about a letter from my father that I received yesterday, in which he mentions you."

Equally surprised and delighted by her action, Julian eagerly took her proffered hand, but was almost too much agitated to comprehend her words, and stammered in reply. Mercedes, struck by the timidity and embarrassment of his manner, redoubled her efforts to set him at ease by the frank kindness of her own. When they reached the gallery which was the object of their visit, Miss Ratcliffe missed no opportunity of seeking his opinions with the deference she believed them to deserve.

In the course of this morning Julian felt more deeply than before that the society of Mercedes did indeed possess a peculiar charm for him. love of his art had much of the same enthusiasm which marked his own devotion to it. In addition to this sympathy with his tastes, the sincere pleasure which it afforded Mercedes to obey to the utmost of her power, the request of her beloved father, inclined her from the first, to seek every possible means of benefiting Julian, and she resolved, by obtaining for him from Lady Sylvester a general admission to the house, to gain him s much notice among those who frequented it as possible, and above all, to seek to interest Lord Sylvester in his welfare. This last wish was speedily gratified; for from this day, Lord Sylvester bestowed on him far more of his attention than it was at all his habit to give to strangers; frequently sought him in his studio, and invited him to accompany them in their visits to scenes which he thought mutually interesting. The singular genius which Julian displayed, the passionate cornestness with which he pursued his object, the

melancholy which pervaded his thoughts and sentiments, and every expression of them, the pathetic turn which his imagination gave to things before indifferent, the intelligence and sensibility that beamed from his eye, and modulated every tone of his voice, and not less the timid reserve of hismanner, that seemed to conceal from sight so much that was worth discovering, all these characteristics inspired Lord Sylvester and Mercedes with a lively interest in him from the time he became personally known to them. The thoughts and the heart of Mercedes, however, were by no means sufficiently disengaged to allow this feeling to reach, as perhaps it might otherwise have done, a dangerou= height. Not so with the unhappy young painter every day saw him more enslaved by the fascina tions of his lovely patroness. He soon discoverethat the talent she displayed in her attempts exercise his art was by no means inconsiderable The modest ardour with which she sought the opinions and advice of those who excelled in it the interest with which she viewed the 'mighty monuments of vanished minds,' the natural taste that dictated her remarks, and the earnestness with which she pursued those occupations in which she found pleasure, all enhanced the charm with which her beauty and her manner had first invested her: and he was enabled, by affording her the instructions she coveted and so gratefully received, to live in the almost daily enjoyment of her dangerous society. This harmony of taste furnished them

also with a ready and never-failing topic of conversation whenever and wherever they met, which circumstance had the effect of relieving Julian from half the timidity which usually impeded his progress in intimacy, and sealed his lips in general society.

Lord Sylvester usually took a part in their conversations, and thus prevented their frequency from becoming either remarkable to others, or in any way embarrassing to themselves. From Lady Sylvester, Julian experienced neither neglect nor unkindness; she did not choose to offend a friend of Mr. Ratcliffe, and it was rather pleasing to her to play the part of a patroness. From Arundel alone he encountered dislike. The jealousy of Arundel's temper caused him to regard with displeasure all who won praise by any means whatever. This feeling was by no means confined to those who were peculiarly his rivals, excelling him in those arts in which he considered himself. and desired to be considered, excellent; in horsemanship and manly sports, in the favour of the ladies, or in the display of more brilliant wit, a more attractive person, or any of those superficial accomplishments in the possession of which he gloried. It was offence enough that they obtained distinction, be it how it might. The dislike which he had from the first felt towards Julian hadmany sources. At the root of all, perhaps, was the consciousness that, only in station was he his superior. The claims that Julian had to be received as a gentleman from his education, his

manners, his appearance, and also his birth, placed him on a footing that made him almost as obnoxious to Arundel as a more avowed rival.

The young artist, with his fine, intellectual countenance, and that pensive melancholy which tempered the fire of his eye, his acknowledged genius and deep enthusiasm, did not fail to awaken much The silent manner in which he shrank from public notice rather than courting it, instead of disarming Arundel's animosity, only increased it; for the man of the world never feels his indignation excited by a rival more strongly than when he= perceives that the very things that he so highlyprizes, are lightly esteemed by him who, nevertheless, wins them. Added to this, the favour in. which he stood with Lord Sylvester and Mercedeswas another cause of dislike. Arundel, like most of the flattered and spoilt children of fashion, wasoften betrayed into the display of the most childish. irritability; and it was enough for any person or any thing to have been the means of calling forth a. rebuke or a reflection on his conduct, to renderthem ever afterwards an object of spite. Some of his invidious remarks on Julian had provoked replies both from his brother and from Mercedes. which, though they silenced him, only embittered his feelings more; but he soon discovered that Julian, though shy and unobtrusive in his usual deportment, knew well how to repel disrespect, and how to extort courtesy from the most impertinent possessors of rank and fashion.

made this discovery, Arundel ceased to be an aggressor, and sometimes he was not sorry to find that Wilmot provided Mercedes with occupations that prevented her from observing or resenting his continual absence. Mercedes one day said to Julian:

"Le voyageur en Italie est obligé de voir des palais et des églises, so whenever you can spare time pray make a giro with us to some of those re ought first to see. I have not been to the Vatican yet. Do come and introduce me to it."

Could Julian refuse? At the appointed hour he was waiting in the corridor, and pacing backwards and forwards in impatient anxiety to see the carriage draw up at the end of the colonnade. At length, it arrived. It contained only Lady Sylvester, Mercedes, and Lord Sylvester. Wentworth had not accompanied them; and again Julian's heart beat with pleasure on perceiving his absence.

Lord Sylvester offered his arm to his mother, and Mercedes followed Julian with a swiftness that soon forced him to leave them behind, or to be cutstripped by her. When she reached the court, she paused awhile, panting from the rapidity with which she had ascended; then, again springing forward, she bounded up the steps, and leaning against the gate, which still separated her from the treasures she desired to behold, impatiently awaited her tardy followers. As soon as they entered, she whispered hurriedly to Julian:

"Let us go at once to the Apollo and the Laooon. I cannot stay here."

"We have still very far to go," replied Julian

with a smile. They passed onward through the Gallery of Inscriptions, Julian saying as they die so: "When you have exhausted all beyond, you must pause here."

"Yes," answered Mercedes, "I will—but no to-day; not even to speak."

In consideration of Mercedes' wishes, Julian leathern past the Gallery of the Nile, without turning aside to enter it, and up the steps to the magnificent Torso, whose claims to our respect are for everestablished by the remembrance of the veneration paid to it before us, by one who is himself hander down to posterity as the possessor of a deathlest fame.\* They glanced at Meleager and his grizzly boar, and then issued out into the quadrangle is which is to be found the presiding deity of the place. Mercedes had now her wish, and stood is the presence of the Apollo.

Oh, glorious Apollo! will aught of human con ception ever be more divine? How could more majesty be conceived? How could more beaut be expressed? Thou art Apollo!—thou art no other god! Oh, Phœbus! oh, resplendent ligh of day! How dazzling is thy glory! Thy visage i not cruel; yet is thy demeanour that of one promp to avenge every wrong and every insult. Oh foolish, misguided Marsyas, how benighted wa thy intellect when thou declaredst thyself his rival Oh! rash, unwise Agamemnon; how couldst thou dare to profane his altar, and expose thy hosts to his wrath? Well couldst thou, mighty Apollo, in

<sup>\*</sup> Michael Angelo.

all the untried vigour of thy youth,\* avenge thy mother's wrongs, disappoint her jealous rival, and say the appalling instrument of her fury.

Mercedes lost in admiration of the inconceivable excellence of the work before her, so novel to her inexperienced eyes, could give no utterance to the thoughts suggested by the contemplation of it. She gazed on it in abstracted silence, and was deaf to the remarks of those around her; then moving as if in a dream, she slowly followed her companions into the adjoining portico, which contains the group of the Laocoon, in which expression is given to 'la pensée la plus tragique que jamais la sculpture ait consacrée.' Julian observed that after she had looked on it for awhile, she turned pale, and shivered; nor was he surprised to see her thus alive to the terrors of it.

With what a vehemence of appeal, the appeal of terror and anguish, do the sons turn to the father, as if in him they had always hope; as if such was their confidence in the power of a parent to protect and succour, that they cannot believe that they shall now be left to perish without his consent being in some manner given to their cruel doom. In what an agony of excruciating pain does one of the children strive to extricate his crushed ancles from the dreadful coils of the serpent! Look at the repelling hands of the other wretched youth; did ever human limbs speak more

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<sup>\*</sup> Apollo was, I believe, three days old when he slew the sepent Python.

exquisite torment in their contortions? In what a agony of excruciating pain does the father contra and lessen his writhing body! And what mou horrible than that the father, while his mangle children are beside him perishing, should by th calls of the flesh, by the sense of those torture that will make themselves felt, that will crush an break up into a helpless mass the bruised bod and expel the spirit violently from its dismantle temple, be forced to turn his thoughts on himse when he should be thinking of them; be forced t abandon them, to yield them no assistance! useless, how vain, how impotent their struggles The beholder gazes on the sufferers without hop without expectation that Gods or men will set ther free. A dull despair enters his heart. As he turn away, a conviction of the invincibleness of destir weighs crushingly on his spirit. He feels in the presence of a hideous mystery; an impenetrab gloom seems to pervade the very atmospher around this group. Such must have been th emotions excited by the representations of tho tragedies of the ancient poets, in which the r morseless fates and furies are represented as worl ing their irresistible wills. The darkness of despa presides, hanging like the thick curtain of nigh shutting out the mild effulgence of hope.

Julian, whose only desire was to gratify Mercedes, seeing how deeply she was affected by which she had already seen, proposed that they shoul leave the rest of the sculpture for another da

and proceed to visit the pictures in the upper chambers; and as they acquiesced, he led the way thither. Supposing that she would be equally impatient as before to reach at once the chief object of attraction, he said:

"Let us pass on into the room which contains the Transfiguration."

Mercedes, after greater expression of admiration than she had before found words to utter, remarked to the young painter:

"How inadequate, I may say how untrue, an idea of this magnificent picture has hitherto been conveyed to my mind by all copies, engravings, and studies from it that I have ever seen. I scarcely had any conception of the grandeur of the composition, none at all of the beauty of the colouring, and was wholly unacquainted with the fine character of the heads. I have so much more pleasure than I had anticipated."

"Do you not feel the most lively interest," said Julian, "in every individual of that afflicted group from the moment you cast your eyes on it? What tender parental affection can we perceive in the father who supports his child, and regards him with dismay. The very manner in which he handles him declares that he is his child, and expresses the exquisite tenderness of his feelings towards him. What anguish does the sight of his sufferings cause him! You can see the strong man trembling with emotion and horror; while in the mother, the course of nature seems reversed. She

endures her agony with a majestic calmness, assumed by her in order to infuse into her husband that composure under misfortune which leaves the mourner capable of making the greatest exertions, while invigorated by the hope of remedying the How self-command strengthens and supports herself and others! Look at that meek, melancholy countenance, so beautifully feminine; she is the sister. Do you not perceive at once that her office is to soothe the maniac in his milder moods, when the fit is less strong upon him, and do not you believe that she has gained a gentle influence over him that no other possesses? apostles, meantime, are disheartened, are confounded, are grieved, are touched with compassion: and these various emotions are to be discovered in their various attitudes and countenances."

Lord Sylvester, after pointing out and expatiating on the extraordinary merit and beauty of the upper group, remarked:

"I cannot at all join in the general condemnation of the union of two actions which probably were passing at the same moment, in the same picture. The mind has no difficulty in combining them; though to have done so must have been, I confess, impossible to the outward vision. Still, I see nothing in this trifling anachronism that shocks the eye, and certainly nothing that is repugnant to the imagination. And now," continued Lord Sylvester, "we must not neglect to observe the opposite picture, the chef-d'œuvre of Domenichino. Is it not magnificent?"

"Yes," replied Julian, "it is magnificent, in execution and in composition, never surpassed perhaps in either; but how inferior to its companion in poetry and imagination! No tale is told that touches the heart or elevates it. The aged saint is an unpleasant exhibition of decayed mortality; the other personages attract your attention principally by the richness of their garments. This kneeling figure in white is indeed graceful and beautiful."

"And the angels," added Lord Sylvester, "if not encumbered with so much clothing would be so. The lion is a majestic creature, and the land-scape and back-ground are singularly beautiful."

Mercedes showed that she felt with Julian that this picture was wanting in interest, by following him almost immediately to another, on which he says gazing with peculiar fondness, and he seemed to watch her approach with an eager desire to lead her to participate in his pleasure.

"This," he said, as they stood before the Madonna di Foligno, "is a work of Raphael's which in almost any other gallery would engross the whole of our interest. Even here we shall perhaps return to it with greater delight than to its more imposing companions of which the very vastness and the complicated interests naturally occasion us fatigue; we shall willingly take refuge in this more simple and no less beautiful picture. Look up into the clouds, and behold one of Raphael's loveliest virgins. One of his heavenly con-

ceptions of the Madonna, which make us feel that the imaginations of all other poets are mundane, and that they are incapable of infusing into the subject all which it is fitted to contain. may be said of the infant Jesus. It is not a mere child, beautiful in its innocence: it is the child Emanuel, and no other. And how fit to be his attendant is the angel beneath! What adoration in his countenance! What intensity of love speaks from his eyes! How admirable a contrast to so much loveliness, softness, and youth, is afforded by the bronzed visage and rugged aspect of the Baptist and the venerable appearance of the grey-haired old men around! How picturesque is the distant = landscape in which the chief object is the favoured town, whose exemption from injury during a terrible and devastating tempest was recorded by this picture. There are still other works of Raphael closely resembling those of his master, Perugino = inferior indeed to those which were the final results of his own unbiassed taste and judgment, but full of beauties and well worthy to be observed\_j There is a fidelity to nature in every head which invests them with individuality in a singular and most interesting manner; a holy sanctity of expression, and earnestness of feeling, a fervour of devotion that is not to be found in the same measure, in any other pictures that I have ever seen, excepting also in those of Perugino himself, one of whose capi di maestro I must show you in the next room. There we shall also find some smaller works of Raphael,

which have afforded me extreme pleasure; but perhaps you will scarcely share it."

With these words, he led them to the Resurrection, painted by Perugino. After they had readily acquiesced in the truth of the praises he had be-

stowed on that painter, Wilmot added:

"This picture, moreover, possesses an individual charm which I am sure will endear it to your memories. Do you see this sleeping soldier in the foreground? The youth, the singular beauty, nay more, the loveliness of the countenance, the perfect repose of the whole figure, the inaction of every limb; these are admirable features in it, and it is well that you should remark these merits before you Learn that peculiar one in which they are all swal-Lowed up and forgotten, at least such was the effect on me when I first recognized in it the portrait of Raphael himself. And this other who is awake and flying in dismay from the scene of the miracle, Perugino. Is there not something," said Julian, a voice of emotion, and addressing himself pecularly to Mercedes, "inexpressibly touching in the remembrance of the tender attachment which subsisted between the youthful scholar and the revered master, and the delicacy which marked the demonstrations they gave of the mutual feeling?"

Mercedes felt convinced more strongly than she could have been by any assurances, that at this moment Julian as earnestly desired to emulate his gratitude as his genius. She knew that he was thinking of her father.

"We shall presently see," replied Lord Sylvester, "a public testimony of the scholar's grateful love and reverence in those figures which he refused to obliterate because his master's hand had executed them."

"Ah!" exclaimed Mercedes, "what work could have honoured his memory as that refusal did! But, Mr. Wilmot, you must not forget to show us those pictures which you mentioned, but doubted whether we should admire."

"Here is one of them," said Julian, with a " Is it not true that some of the creations of fancy and the works of genius excite in us a more sudden pleasure, and win our admiration more than others do, without our being able to account for this power, or to praise them more, or to prove satisfactorily to those over whom they exercise it not, that they ought to be better loved; just as it is with some faces that possess an indescribable charm, 'than beauty dearer,' that never yields to any other superiority, however undeniably greater? Will you not allow that these representations of Faith, Hope and Charity are lovely? And this Annunciation, the middle compartment of this picture which is divided into three! The others are the Adoration of the Magi and the Presentation at the Temple, which I will not entreat you to admire. But see how pure and simple is the Virgin in her meditation, and how light, aerial, and buoyant with joy is the angel as he comes on his blessed mission. He scarcely seems to touch

the ground beneath him. How beautifully elegant is the architectural design which fills up the back-ground!"

Just as they had ceased to examine the pictures we have enumerated, and before they could bestow even a glance on the many others which we have not, the Papal guards began to clear the apartments, and to dismiss the company. Mercedes departed with regret; but still she felt that the lively interest which had been excited was followed by exhaustion, which demanded repose and engendered a mood of contemplative silence that has its own peculiar charm. She did not forget to thank Julian for the pleasure which she had derived from listening to his remarks, but she experienced a feeling of relief when Lord Sylvester took the young painter's arm and proposed to accompany him home on foot, instead of entering the carriage.

She could not, however, leave the Piazza without being once more stimulated to admire. The evening was calm and serene, and the sky throughout the day had presented an unclouded beauty. At this hour, the Colonnade, the fountains and the Obelisk were on one side burnished by the unfaded glow of the rays of the setting sun; and on the other, glittered with the cold, silvery stream of light that the rising moon emitted. Mercedes gazed on this strange and lovely spectacle as long as it was before her eyes, and then sank back to indulge in a delicious reverie, to which Lady Sylvester offered no interruption, for she fell asleep.

## CHAPTER IX.

Altra non veggio mai, nè veder bramo, Nè 'l nome d'altra ne' sospir miei chiamo. PETRAECA.

The summons of which Lord Sylvester was the bearer to Julian, to attend Mercedes and his mother in their peregrinations in the Eternal City, became more and more frequent. His presence seemed by all of them to be considered indispensable, and Julian continued to obey, but it was with no untroubled mind that he did so. The very frankness with which Mercedes invited him to join her on all occasions, and the undisguised pleasure with which she always welcomed him, instead of giving him any satisfaction, were but so many cruel wounds to his heart, as they were but so many proofs of the entire indifference of her own.

Sometimes, on returning home he would passionately declare, as he recalled all the trifling occurrences of the day they had passed together, that were she to detect the love he so cautiously concealed, and indignantly forbid him again to approach her, shedding perhaps at the same moment one tear of pity to soften, though not to cancel the rigid decree, such conduct would cause him less bitterness of feeling than her present un-

heeding kindness. He generally returned, however, to the conviction, that to be permitted to be near her and to behold her, even though silent and forgotten, was far more endurable than absence. At times he would even so far fancy himself happy as to rejoice in his freedom of intercourse with her, grateful for the interest which she felt in him, and satisfied to possess the friendship which she did not hesitate to express with a warmth of which he had no reason to doubt the sincerity.

Sometimes, it is true, his mind misgave him; his wilful blindness could not render him wholly insensible to the dangerous folly of thus continuing to seek the very cause of the malady that consumed him. He could not turn a deaf ear to the rebukes of conscience: but when 'severer reason formed far other views' than those wild ones with which his fancy solaced his pain, he would seek to justify himself in her sight, by pleading that any proceeding contrary to the line of conduct he had adopted, would, in his situation, be so unaccountable, that it could not fail to awaken a suspicion of the hidden cause, and thus at once precipitate him into those difficulties which he had most to fear. If reason still appeared unsatisfied, he would silence her farther expostulations by a peremptory assertion that the devotion which he paid to Mercedes was, in its open demonstrations, no more than what he owed to her father; that to neglect to perform every trifling service for her that she asked at the expense of his time, and, (though she knew it not,) of his peace of mind, was to shield himself from danger, only by being guilty of ingratitude. In short, it was nothing more than his duty not to let a day pass without seeing her, and to occupy his thoughts in attempting to anticipate her wishes, and his time in seeking to fulfil them. The hours which for this purpose he borrowed from those he had hitherto allotted to his studies, he strove to repay by stealing them from his rest, and the earliest beams of the sun found him at his easel, pale, perhaps, and fatigued by the vigils of the preceding night. With such specious arguments as these he replied to reason; and silenced, not convinced, she could only hide her face and blush.

Such an unsatisfactory conference it was that occupied his mind one day as he walked along the Corso on his way to the palazzo, to keep a promise he had made to Miss Ratcliffe to accompany her to the Corsini Gallery. There were many others of the party: but, as was their custom, Lord Sylvester and Mercedes bestowed their attention principally on the young painter, whose opinions they sought The pleasure which they derived from to elicit. their visit to this extensive and beautiful gallery. was not inferior to what they had promised themselves. The Ecce Homo, too painful to be contemplated with satisfaction, the beautiful landscapes. the excellent portraits, among others Titian's Philip II., the 'salvage beasts' of Rubens, and many other well-known pictures detained them long. "I must," said Mercedes, pausing before a St.

Sebastian, by Rubens, "have seen at least a hundred paintings of this subject since I have been in Italy, and yet I do not remember one so affecting as this is;" and she gazed on it not without emotion: there was no one very near her excepting Julian, who, contemplating it also, said in a low voice:

"It is the introduction of these ministering angels that renders this picture so touching. Behold this one who is striving to slacken the cords round his ancles, so that they may not cut the bone. With what exquisite tenderness does an-Other seek to extricate the arrow from his side. without widening the wound, or causing a fresh throb of agony! And may not this lovely vision be only the representation of an unseen truth? not probable that invisible spirits hover around the martyr in his hour of pain, and minister to the Sevants even as they ministered to the Master when they brought him food in the desert? Dot they also need sustenance? Is there any thought more replete with consolation than this: that our griefs and agonies are not exposed to the eyes of men only, from which we would so gladly Even our joys and pleasures may be enhanced by the same belief. The idea that there are purer and higher beings ascending up to God himself, who behold the inmost feelings of our hearts, and sympathize with them, may lend support in the bitterest hour, and impart additional ecstacy to the happiest!"

Julian stopped, dismayed at the length an nature of the rhapsody in which he had indulge. Thus when with kindred spirits would the timidis and reserve inherent in his character be for awhiforgotten, and he would at such times pour fort thoughts and sentiments almost too solemn foutterance.

Mercedes listened in silent emotion; at lengt she moved on, slowly. When next she stoppe it was before Guido's well-known picture of H rodias's Daughter, and she said,

"I cannot admire that picture very much i any respect; but I think that the countenance exactly represents our ideas of her, unless index we think of her as a child. It is a face of a much beauty, and of so little interest. What c you think of it?"

"I agree with you in thinking the conception of the character very good; but I do not admire the painting, nor the arrangement of the pictur. There is a great deal of beauty in the countenance and also an expression of absolute imbecility. We should remember in looking at this, that we are never led to suppose that the daughter of Heredias was actuated by any passion in making he barbarous request. She felt neither hatred me anger. If Herodias herself were represented, would be proper to portray her with a countenance convulsed with contending passions and full a malignancy. Here, there is no ferocity to territus; but there is a heartlessness that disgusts.

am glad that he has not infused any intellect into that face. A combination of great mental power and great wickedness would be fiendish."

Lady Sylvester was so much charmed with a Madonna of Carlo Maratti, that she called to Mercedes to come and see it.

"How very pretty!" exclaimed Miss Ratcliffe, as soon as she looked at it. It is a picture of the Virgin reading. The face is one of extreme beauty, much less fair than painters generally represent her; the hair being of a dark brown, and the complexion warm and glowing. The dress is brown also, and gracefully folded over the head and falling on the shoulders; the back-ground represents a curtain drawn aside, and a view of a distant landscape; simplicity and repose reign throughout the picture.

Julian remained beside Mercedes till the rest of the party had advanced, and then said:

"You have applied the very term to it; it is very pretty. It is wholly destitute of the sublimity and the ideality which I think ought to enter into this subject. It is a picture of a beautiful maiden enjoying all the peace of innocence; but if it be Mary, let us at least suppose it to be Mary before the Annunciation; for that face does not express a heart filled with those high thoughts which made the meek and lowly Virgin declare that henceforth 'all generations should call her blessed.'"

"Ah!" replied Mercedes, "I think that none but Raphael has ever expressed what you describe.

I wish that you would make the attern self."

On entering a smaller room, they found with portraits, many of which were excell the productions of Titian, Vandyke, an equally celebrated.

"How plainly," said Lord Sylvester examined them, "you can read the chathe Romish church in its palmy days, in traits of its noble and most distinguished How rarely do you find one that really ranything but a magnificent prince, a haugrior, a subtle statesman, or a lover of pleathe good things of this life. There is not the apostolic character to be found in them countenances often bear traces of cru craft; they are often mocking and sarcast dress is luxurious, and frequently their pereffeminate."

"Here is one who is not effeminate," so Sylvester, who caught his last words, and before the portrait of a cardinal. He wa larly handsome; his piercing black eyes of intellect, and threatened to look quite the deeds of men.

"No," replied Lord Sylvester, "certain that bushy black beard alone will exert from that charge; but you will find it dishield him from some of the other epither made use of. But we must proceed, at you still wish to carry into effect your into

entering the garden, which will quite reward you for the exertion of so doing. The view of Rome from the Janiculum is one of the best, I think."

Lady Sylvester expressed her willingness to comply with this proposal; and Mercedes, though she felt that the pleasure which the gallery could have afforded was not half exhausted, followed without expostulation.

## CHAPTER X.

Can you not see, or will you not observe
The strangeness of his altered countenance?
How insolent he is become of late?

SHAKSPEARE.

"INDEED, my dear Arundel," exclaimed Lady Sylvester, "you seem exceedingly out of humour this morning. You have contradicted every remark I have made, although they were all very commonplace, really mere truisms. You have disarranged all the plans that I had formed, and yet proposed no better instead. If we were in England, you might lay all your faults on the climate and trust to be forgiven. But here the sun shines too brightly for you to find any excuse."

"I am out of sorts, I confess," replied Arundel, walking to the open window, and leaning out of it, cruelly twisting in his fingers as he spoke, a rose-coloured billet, scented with rich perfumes, which he finally tore into very minute pieces, and dropped them one by one into the street beneath, seeming to be actuated by a feeling of spite even towards the pretty embossed rose buds, and the delicate characters thereon inscribed; "but I would not avail myself of your excuse even if it existed." Mon humeur ne dépend quère du temps. Jai

mon brouillard et mon beau temps au-dedans de moi. Le bien et le mal de mes affaires mêmes y font peu,' as I read in some French book of Miss Ratcliffe's yesterday."

"Well," said Lady Sylvester with some impatience, "I hope the fog that just now obscures your intellects is not very dense, for it is about your own affairs that I wish to consult you, and I have been waiting for an opportunity to speak seriously to you. It is true that I have undertaken the management of them; but I cannot and will not my longer dispense with your aid. Be assured that you are greatly mistaken if you imagine that Mercedes Ratcliffe is a woman that will submit to the indignity of neglect. She is very young and very inexperienced, it is true; and I have possessed her mind very strongly with the idea that you really love her. But, though she is unsuspicious, she is also singularly intelligent; and if once undeceived, you will find the task of blinding her again far beyond your power. How ungrateful and how unreasonable you are. 'Tu fais l'indifférent et le dégouté dans la bonne fortune. You will provoke me to leave you to your fate, and to suffer you to drag on a weary existence on a miserable pittance; a younger brother's scanty provision."

"Ah, there it is!" yawned Arundel. "Why was I a younger brother? There is Sylvester, now, would be just as happy if his income were hundreds instead of thousands—far happier, indeed;

for then his conscience, instead of preaching to hir the duty of dwelling among his own people, servin his country, et cetera, would allow him to remain here, to study the fine arts and cultivate his tastento wander from churches to picture galleries, are from palaces to ruins. Ah, mother! you should have done better."

"Believe me, my dear Arundel, I did the best that I could," replied Lady Sylvester, with great composure, "and what I had I gave you. You have my fortune, such as it was! and my discretion, and my skill, are likewise at your command if you so desire. What can you expect more than I have provided for you? Mercedes is beautiful, young, rich, amiable, generous, affectionate."

"Mother," said Arundel, interrupting her, and drawing himself up haughtily, "how can the blood that flows in your veins and mine, brook an alliance with a citizen's daughter?"

"This is a suggestion of Mrs. Annesly Marchmont's," replied Lady Sylvester colouring with anger.

"If you remember," returned Arundel, drily, "it is an objection that I urged even before I left England."

"One that I have heard you mention, I allow, but never urge until now. Nevertheless, if it be insuperable, I have no more to say. Make your own decision; but let a decision be made. I will not continue to lay a thousand plans to submit to

a thousand annoyances; to administer daily food and flattery to the folly and vanity of such a child as this girl is, if you, by your indolence, ill-humour, caprice, or for some secret design of your own," and Lady Sylvester's eyes flashed with anger, "undo all that I effect, and render void those means which, aided merely by passive acquiescence on your part, could not fail to answer my purpose."

"Nay mother," replied Arundel, with a sneer, "if all these exertions enable you only to spend Miss Ratcliffe's money with impunity, as you have hitherto done, I think you might consider them sufficiently recompensed."

"Let this most odious conversation cease!" exclaimed his mother, rising angrily, as if to depart. "I only desire to know whether you will or will not accompany us to Tivoli, in order then to determine what my future line of conduct shall be."

"Dear mother, you must stay with me a little longer," cried Arundel, suddenly changing his manner from one of provoking impertinence to one of playful fondness. "It is dangerous to leave me to myself, for—

Wayward, fickle is my mood, Hovering betwixt bad and good;

and besides, I want to explain to you how and why it is quite impossible for me to accompany you to Tivoli on Thursday."

"And why impossible?" interrupted Sylvester with astonishment.

"I have an engagement for that day which cannot, with any decent show of civility, not to keep."

"This cannot be true, Arundel; you proportion Thursday yourself only yesterday, and, in concern quence of your so doing, Mercedes and I in several persons to join our party; and you conow refuse to go with us. This is too dar solecism for even you to be guilty of. Act and I will never make an effort in your favour Mercedes again. I will not see myself and so grossly insulted."

"Your anger pains me, really. Neverth I cannot accompany you as you desire."

"What! Mrs. Annesly Marchmont has se command your attendance on that day? have just destroyed a note from her. I say do so."

"The truth is, that I have long been en to go with her to Frescati, and now she wri tell me that she has fixed her party for Thu Why will not another day do for you?"

"Really!" exclaimed Lady Sylvester, "the solence is not to be endured. Am I to be slave, as well as you? Begone, Sir, or let go," and she walked towards the door, her be ful features so disfigured by the angry pawhich Arundel's conduct and remarks excited, had Mercedes then beheld her, she would ha

garded with dismay and horror the woman whom she had accepted as a friend. Lady Sylvester paused almost imperceptibly before she left the room, expecting that Arundel, thus urged, would say something to prevent her departure. He, however, did not move from the sofa on which he had flung himself, nor did his countenance relax from its air of sulky defiance. Lady Sylvester opened the door, and closed it impatiently after her.

A few minutes afterwards, Arundel sprang up, and glancing at the clock, exclaiming, "She will be gone, I vow"—snatched up his hat, ran down the stairs, and was speedily in the boudoir of Mrs. Annesly Marchmont.

## CHAPTER XI.

Lasso! che desiando Vo quel ch' esser non puote in alcun modo, E vivo di desir fuor di speranza.

PRTRA

Est-on juste sans être sensible, surtout en mat bienfaits?

After this angry contest with her son, Sylvester continued her operations, with respher projected party, without receiving any 1 open opposition from him. She was forced main ignorant of his proceedings, but was dito augur well from his silence. She believe he had submitted to her desires, though we much displeasure and repugnance, that, in re he would not afford her the satisfaction of ing that she had conquered, until he coulonger conceal it from her.

On the evening of the following day, the sence was requested at a festa di ballo, gir the —— Ambassadress. Mercedes entered the leaning on Wentworth's arm, and his moth tolerably satisfied when she saw him conduto dance. While Mercedes was thus engage perceived Julian, who had entered later, stanot far from her. His eyes were directed to her; and the moment that she met ther

recognised him with a smile that summoned him to her side. She said, as he took the hand she extended to him, as he approached:

"We have made a party to go to Tivoli tomorrow, and you must come with us. How long it is since we have seen you. Where have you been? Very busily employed?"

The progress of the dance prevented her from waiting for his answer; but when returned to her Place, she asked for his reply.

"You will come with us?" she said.

During the short interval intervening between her first utterance of the wish and its earnest reiteration, Julian had remembered that it was really out of his power to accede to Miss Ratcliffe's request. ought certainly to have rejoiced that accident thus aided him to keep the firm resolve he had made to avoid her dangerous presence (a resolve lately made, and put into practice); but there was more of regret than of joy in the tone of his voice as he replied. Perhaps this was out of deference to the conventional forms of good-breeding, which usually demand an expression of a feeling quite contrary to the real one of the breast. No, it was impossible. Julian was going to pack a picture and to send it to England. could not neglect the opportunity afforded him of doing so, and it was one that would admit of no delay.

Mercedes looked disappointed, and she said that she was so; when, much to her surprise, and much more to Julian's, Mr. Wentworth, with an air of the utmost kindness and good nature, exclaimed: "Why not go to Tivoli the next day? If Wilmot cannot postpone his business, we can postpone our excursion. If you wish Wilmot to accompany us, you must by your commands defer the departure of his picture, or ours. Which will be most easy?"

Julian envied him too much the bright look of gratitude which this suggestion procured to acknow ledge any towards him himself; he only pointed out the utter impropriety of such a proceeding. Mercedes paused thoughtfully; then, after a moment's silence, she turned again to Arundel and said:

"Do you think it would annoy Lady Sylvester to propose this plan to her?"

Wentworth, eager beyond all things to regain his liberty, and believing it now to be in his power to do so, assured her that it was ridiculous to suppose that it could make any difference to his mother, which day they fixed on.

"The party is yours," he exclaimed. "Come, the dance is over; come and arrange it with her," and he led her away, leaving Julian lost in utter astonishment.

When they reached Lady Sylvester, Mercedes still leaning on Arundel's arm, raised her eyes to her friend's face, and with the utmost simplicity told her request. Lady Sylvester, guessing at one the author of this proposition, directed a glance of fiery indignation towards her graceless son, by which however he was unharmed, for he has turned away his head to speak to some one near

and would not look at her. Though it failed to reach him, it did not fall wholly without effect to the ground. Lord Sylvester was beside them, and catching this look, felt his curiosity not a little excited by these proceedings, and determined to solve the mysteries which seemed to exist. He soon perceived that Lady Sylvester's anger was not to be any further indulged at present. Perhaps it was that her Ladyship felt unauthorized to exert much control, as she allowed the whole expenses of the day to be defrayed by Mercedes' purse; an arrangement with which Lord Sylvester was not acquainted. She expressed some annoyance, and some disapprobation, but still in gentle terms, and asked the cause of her capricious movements.

"Oh!" said Mercedes, "it is not caprice. I wished Mr. Wilmot to go with us," turning to Lord Sylvester, as if here she expected his support; "and he cannot. And the very reason that keeps him here, makes me wish to remain also; for he has finished a picture, and is going to send it off to England to his father to-morrow, and we have never seen it. We might easily do so in the morning before he packs it, if we don't go to Tivoli. So now you know all my reasons; and, dearest Lady Sylvester, may I make such arrangements as I wish?"

These words extorted an assent from Lady Sylvester's lips which Mercedes could scarcely wait to hear, as she was entreated to return to the ball-

room by a partner who, during this discussion, had vainly urged his claims. She looked around for Julian, from whom she desired to obtain his permission to visit his studio. At length, she perceived him engaged in conversation with Lord Sylvester, and in spite of her companion's complaints that the dance was already nearly over, she bent their course imperceptibly towards them; and then stopping, said to Julian as she passed:

"We are not going to-morrow, and I intend to come to see your picture. It is very strange that you should not have invited us to do so. May we come?"

She moved on as she spoke, and the young painter, on recovering from the joyful surprise which her words had excited in him, observed that Lord Sylvester had fixed his eyes on him with an expression of the closest scrutiny. Mercedes, on returning to Lady Sylvester, found her more evidently displeased than when she left her. At no very great distance from them was Mrs. Annesly Marchmont, and at her side, Arundel Wentworth. He would undoubtedly have gladly removed to some part of the room in which he would have been out of the reach of their eyes; but probably the lady despised any victory without a public triumph, and chose to station herself where his homage should be displayed, especially to those whom it was designed to mortify. At this sight Lady Sylvester was so angry that she almost forgot to be prudent, and could with difficulty refrain from pointing out to the artless girl beside her, the unworthy by-play in which she had been made to act a part, and to unveil to her the treachery which she had herself enabled her false lover to practice. It was, therefore, a relief to her when Lord Sylvester, reminding Mercedes of a promise to dance with him, led her away, and thus put it out of her power to give utterance to the indignation she felt. Mercedes perceived that Lord Sylvester looked more than commonly serious, and seemed even more than usually disposed to silence. As they walked on without speaking, she exclaimed:

"Oh! there is Mr. Wilmot going to leave the room. I hope that you have made him promise to show us his picture?"

"Yes," replied Lord Sylvester. "He asked me to tell you that you might see it any time before noon."

"And you will accompany us, will you not?"

"Certainly; I wish very much to see it. I have no doubt that we shall admire it."

"I think that my changes in our projects ought to please every one."

"They ought to please Mr. Wilmot, certainly; for to him they are very complimentary. Did they please my brother?" asked Lord Sylvester, drily.

Mercedes looked rather surprised, and not quite pleased, and then answered:

"Yes, of course they did. It was his original proposal, not mine. In short," she added impatiently, "every body is pleased but you, I believe.

You, I confess, do not appear to be so; and yet you are the very person who I imagined would best like what I had planned. Really you are very whimsical, which I never before discovered."

Lord Sylvester smiled. He was now considerably enlightened with regard to the mystery which occupied his attention. He continued:

"So Arundel proposed it, did he? Since when has his passion for the fine arts acquired so muci strength?"

" I think he did so to oblige me," replied Meccedes in a low voice, a little piqued.

Lord Sylvester smiled again; but though I was amused, he was both sorry and angry. Wern worth seemed at last roused by his mother's look or the reproaches of his conscience, or fears of the consequences, to break through the thraldom is which Mrs. Annesly Marchmont held him, and returning to Mercedes left her no more. Mrs Annesly Marchmont rose to quit the room; and in doing so, purposely passed close to where they were standing. In a voice of the utmost sweetness, at the same time fixing her large blue eyes, with a stare of cold impertinence on Mercedes' face, she murmured:

"Good night, Mr. Wentworth. Don't forget to-morrow"

Lady Sylvester bit her lip, colouring with anger; but Mercedes very quietly raised her eyes to Arundel as the lady moved on, and said:

"What does she mean? Have you engaged

yourself for to-morrow? I thought you were oming with us to see Mr. Wilmot's pictures."

"And so I am," returned Arundel with every appearance of frankness. "What o'clock do you go? Early, I suppose?"

"Yes, half past ten."

"I shall not forget," replied Arundel, in a tone of much devotion; while his brother, who heard the dialogue, turned away with a gesture of impatience, and something of an air of contempt.

#### CHAPTER XII.

Hail, young creative spirit, from whose mind Teeming tumultuously with thoughts and things, The flitting notion with strong power combined Of fixing all those grand imaginings, An intellectual world of wonder springs!

THE first thought that occurred to Julian th following morning on awaking from feverish an disturbed slumbers was that of the promised visi and with that idea came a train of recollection and of anticipations. Those resolutions which ha cost him struggles, long repeated, and of such bi terness, now seemed as completely overthrown ar destroyed as though they had never been estal lished. He was again reinstated in his form position, rendered if possible more dangerous b the brief period of absence that had intervened and yet what had occurred to shake the found: tion of his firm resolves, to disprove the wisdom his determinations, to render them less necessar than when first made? Conscience briefly as swered: nothing. He was afraid to interroga her further, or he would have heard that every ci cumstance that had contributed to put to fligh his wiser purposes, should in truth have tended 1 strengthen them.

In order to drive away these unpleasant cogitations, he began to prepare for the reception of his Suests. He placed his picture in the most favourable light and surveyed it anew, but with dimished satisfaction; even those parts which he had regarded with most complacency, now excited little Pleasure. He became every moment more and ore unwilling to submit it to the gaze of Mercedes and the scrutiny of Lord Sylvester. He now eemed it wholly unworthy of the attention he had Claimed for it, and regretted his decision to send it as a sample of his powers to those who had hailed the early dawnings of his abilities. Even less satisfied with his present train of thought than with that which had preceded it, Julian permitted his mind to wander back to the occurrences of the past evening. He retraced every accident, fondly re-Called every word, smile, and gesture that he had noted; but was finally disquieted by the remembrance of the penetrating, observant look which he had encountered from Lord Sylvester's eye, and from which he had shrunk away abashed and alarmed. At this recollection his cheek burnt with shame and vexation; he execrated his folly and imprudence, and determined that he would increase his watchfulness over every look, every tone, every ac-Should Lord Sylvester or any of Mercedes' friends discover his secret passion, he knew not whether they would most blame his presumption or despise his weakness. Should he betray it to herself, he could not endure to contemplate the

possibility of an occurrence which must wholl banish him from her society, deprive him of the pleasure of ever hearing himself addressed by hearing terms of familiar kindness, and even probabily render him an object of aversion where he head hitherto been distinguished by peculiar favour.

While Julian was thus skilfully tormenting himself, the appointed hour arrived, and with it = Ine appointed guests, consisting of Lady Sylvester, Miss Ratcliffe, and the two brothers. Julian's farst observations were, with some anxiety, directed to discover whether the ideas by which he had been so harassed had found any place in their thoughts. Lord Sylvester had discarded the more than common seriousness which had struck both Julian and Mercedes on the preceding evening; he seemed to share the lively interest which the latter expressed in the picture they were about to behold, and joined in the reproaches which she bestowed on the painter, in consequence of the intention which she had detected of dispatching it without submitting it to their view. Wentworth was full of good humour, and prepared to extend his approbation even to Julian. Lady Sylvester alone appeared uninterested and dissatisfied, being disposed to regard Wilmot with displeasure, knowing him to be the cause, however innocent, of the defeat which her plans had experienced; and this disposition towards him was probably strengthened by the consideration that he was the protege of Lord Sylvester, whom in her heart she cordially disliked and feared.

Julian proceeded to display the work which was the object of their visit, and led them to the casel on which he had placed his picture. The subject of it was the celebrated view from the Janiculum Hill, and the Oak of Tasso, which no one omits to visit, occupied the foreground.

"I have chosen," said Julian, "as most likely to please those for whom it is intended, a subject of much local interest. I have wished to represent not only the beauty of the prospect, which is of itself quite sufficient to attract us to the spot, but also to recall the associations that make it peculiarly hallowed, and to pay a tribute of affection to the unhappy poet, who spent there many of those hours which he wished to devote to a solemn preparation for his death, which he knew to be so near. We learn that in the tranquil shelter of these convent walls," pointing to the church of St. Onofrio, which formed one of the objects portrayed, "he became dead to the desire of fame and the love of glory, and almost indifferent to the homage proffered to him. Tardy indeed it was, and inadequate to heal the wounds which past cruelty had so wantonly inflicted! But I cannot believe that his heart grew insensible to his early love, nor that the fair image of Leonora fided from his memory, nor that the bright colours in which his fancy first painted her became fainter and colder as he approached that land where all earthly distinctions should be levelled, and where the separations occasioned by them should have an end."

As he spoke, he pointed to the figures which filled the foreground of his picture, in which he had represented Tasso, sleeping beneath the tree which is still called by his name. His wild and haggard features were softened by a radiant expression of hope and joy diffused over his countenance, as if bright dreams blest him; and to show that they did so indeed, a faint and lovely vision of Leonora floated in the air before him. there as his guardian angel, and she proffered to him, not the frail and perishable crown with which his friends so eagerly invited him to bind his brow, but one that was immortal and to be worn in heaven. In her countenance there was a tender mclancholy, for she had suffered with him; there = was also a holy joy, for she saw that his sorrows were drawing fast to a close. Her attitude was that = of earnest entreaty; for she was bent on winning his ear to hear her message, and his heart to accept the gift she bore.

Lord Sylvester and Mercedes were both touched by the conception of this picture. This flight of Julian's imagination, and the deep feeling with which he had executed it, charmed them much. It was many minutes before the latter could express the pleasure that she felt; then fearing that the artist would think her cold and insensible to his merits, she tried to speak and tell him how great was her admiration; still she found herself unable to give utterance to her sentiments in words and it was only the eloquence of her countenance that spoke her meaning to Julian, who read in

the moisture of her dark eye how deeply she felt with him.

"I owe the idea which you approve," said Julian, after they had looked at his picture for a time, "to a passage that I met with in Ossian, which struck me as beautiful when I read it. I should like to show it to you; I ought to have it here, for I studied it while I painted." And he looked round the room for the book. When he found it, it opened of itself at the passage he sought, and he placed it in Lord Sylvester's hand, saying: "Pray read it aloud, though it is only partially applicable."

"'On Lena's gloomy heath the voice of music died away. The unconstant blast blew hard; the high oak shook its leaves around. Of Everallin were my thoughts, when in the light of beauty she came, her blue eyes rolling in tears; she stood on a cloud before my eyes.'"

Mercedes remained gazing on the picture while Lord Sylvester read, and when he ceased, she said, after a short pause:

"I like the words, but I like your picture better."
Julian smiled with pleasure at her remark, and
then taking up the book again, he added:

"There are many passages in this volume which has gone through such reverses of fortune, once extolled as not inferior to Homer, now so despised that few will acknowledge that they can read it with pleasure, which I think would afford subjects of interest to a painter, and that I have been accustomed to consider as one of the tests of poetry. There really are many descriptions and epithets,

though perhaps too lavishly introduced, that once suggest a picture, and I should like to s you some sketches by which I have illustrated s images as have struck my imagination."

"Pray do so," exclaimed Mercedes. "Not I can be persuaded to read Ossian."

Julian reached down a portfolio and opening began to look within it for the drawings he mentioned. It so happened that Lord Sylve was nearest to him at that moment, and his naturally fell on the leaves that the painter has turned over in his search. Whether it was Julian perceived that they were thus employed whether any other cause of embarrassment s denly sprung up, but he changed colour and cle the book more quickly than he had opened then turning to another part, he took out drawings he wished to show them and placed tl before them. One was a face young, beautiful, radiant with joy; eyes, lips and dimpled che alike beaming with excess of happiness. Un neath it was written: "Gladness rose, a light u her face!"

Another was a stormy warrior, thus describy the poet: "Wrathful stood Swaran. He re his silent eyes. He threw his sword on earth; shaggy brows waved dark above his gathered ra

"Those 'silent eyes,'" said Lord Sylves "which you have made there so anything but si would do for a representation of the speechless 1 of Ajax, when Ulysses met him in Hades."

As it seemed quite uncertain to Lady Sylvester

to Arundel when they should find Mercedes weary of examining the contents of Julian's portfolio, they united in reminding her that it was time to depart. Lord Sylvester also remembering that it was necessary that Julian should dispatch his picture, proposed to leave him to his avocation; as they withdrew, Mercedes cast back one more lingering look, and slowly and silently followed them. Julian was left alone in no very composed state of mind; and Arundel, the moment that he had seen his mother and Miss Ratcliffe back to the Palazzo, hurried away to join Mrs. Annesly Marchmont and her party.

### CHAPTER XIII.

Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

Not mad, but bound more than a madman is.

ROMEO AND JULIET.

Nè del volgo mi cal, nè di fortuna, Nè di me molto, nè di cosa vile.

PETRARCA.

THE morning was one of most serene beauty the sun had scarcely yet risen, and had now half laid aside its waking glories when Lady Sylvester and her party issued from the Porta San Lorenzo, and as they left it behind them they turned to gaze back on its ruddy bastions, burnished with the glowing rays that beamed on them.

There were many interesting objects on their road to attract their attention and to furnish them with topics of conversation. But Mercedes alway: found that she naturally sank into silence wheneves she entered on the wide expanse of the desolat-Campagna; when she gazed on the ruins that ar scattered over it, the nameless tombs and demor lished towers, and thought how forgotten are the inmates of the first, and how the strength of the latter is laid low, a meditative and melancholy moowould come over her, and disincline her to speak the present.

At length they began slowly to mount the ascent that leads to Tivoli; the road wound gradually up the olive-covered hill. The grotesque shapes which the twisted stems of these trees assume in old age. their light and silvery foliage, the picturesque groups of peasantry that were to be seen beneath their boughs, young and beautiful women, erect and stately in deportment, bearing with an air of native dignity vessels of classic form on their heads; their garments almost invariably of blue and red, rich and vivid in their colouring, forcibly reminding the beholder of the figures that adorn the pictures and frescoes of the Italian painters; their glowing complexions and dark and glossy tresses, brilliantly relieved by the contrast of the snowy linen folded on their heads; all these circumstances attracted their observation and greatly enhanced the pleasure with which our wandering compatriots surveyed the lovely scene around them. They hastened through the wretched and dirty town with all possible speed. The gentlemen of the party vainly strove to silence the clamour of the vociferous guides, who flocked about them on every side, and selecting such of their humble description of steeds as they required, ordered them to their proper post. They thence proceeded to view the beautiful temple of Vesta, and descended the narrow and slippery path that leads to the Grotto of Neptune, deafened as they went by the thunders, and overwhelmed by the savage grandeur of the spectacle produced by this turmoil of waters.

And now the party, which was numerous, began to fall in some measure into the order in which the different members of it desired that it should be ranged. Julian stood aloof. In such an assemblage he knew that it was not for him to seek Mercedes' side to proffer the assistance she must need. Arundel, intent on banishing from her mind any suspicions that she might possibly entertain as to the manner in which he had spent the preceding day, sought Miss Ratcliffe with an ostentatious display of eagerness, and placed himself beside her with an air of decision that was designed to assert a conscious right to that station. Lord Sylvester, who never interfered with his brother's pretensions, whatever he might think of them\_ quietly took Wilmot's arm, and addressed his conversation to him as to one whose sentiments and feelings he wished to elicit, and was disposed to hear with attention. The eyes of his chosen companion however did not appear to be solely bens on the picturesque beauties of the scene, but frequently wandered towards Mercedes, watching every step of her foot, as if fearful of danger, while he seemed striving to catch the words that feL from her lips, though distance rendered her voice scarcely audible.

At length the party arrived at the artificial passage which has been formed for the river, and which may be entered and traversed by those whe deem their heads strong enough to pursue a course unprotected by any barricade, along a pave-

ment, scarcely broad enough to admit of two persons walking abreast, in spite of the sensations caused by the sight and sound of the foaming, roaring, tumultuous motions of the imprisoned stream beneath, and the feeling as if a crushing weight were insecurely suspended overhead, which is produced by the loudly re-echoing stone vault. edes and Arundel entered this passage carelessly and thoughtlessly, intending to issue at the other Others would probably have followed their example, but their progress was suddenly arrested. Mercedes had scarcely proceeded twenty yards when her head grew dizzy on beholding the boiling, rushing water at her feet; and bewildered by the reverberation from the walls that encompassed her, her strength and her senses failed her, and she fell in utter lifelessness from the narrow path on which she stood. Another moment would have seen her engulphed in the rapid stream and lost for ever; but Arundel caught her as she sank, and hastily retracing his steps, bore her back in safety to light and air.

If the general consternation and horror excited by this accident were indescribable, what was the violence of the emotion awakened in Julian's heart! He was at the time fortunately a little removed from the immediate scene of danger, and Lord Sylvester was with him. Scarcely did he begin to comprehend the nature of the occurrence which had taken place, when the anguish of his soul was pictured on his wild and ghastly countenance, and his appearance, even in that moment of confusion, would have quickly attracted observation had not Lord Sylvester, unseen by others, grasped his arm firmly, and said with something of the sternness assumed to awe a madman:

"Calm yourself; she is safe now. You must control your emotion."

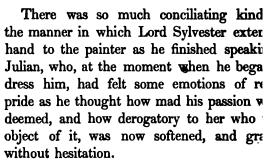
Julian had self-possession enough to comprehend his words and obey his injunction. He did not therefore venture to follow him to the spot where Mercedes lay scarcely restored to her senses. From a distance at which he could plainly discern her form stretched on the ground and supported by Lady Sylvester, he continued to gaze anxiously on the group until he saw her rise, and leaning on Wentworth's arm, slowly advance on their onward path. Then passionately clasping his hands, he exclaimed:

"Oh, God! that she should have been in danger, and that he should have saved her!"

What was his confusion, when on turning to follow them, he found his progress again arrested by Lord Sylvester, whose grave countenance told that these wild, incautious words had reached his ears and excited his disapprobation! Julian walked by his side in silent confusion, at a loss how to speak, yet feeling that silence confessed humiliation. He had no doubt that his exclamation had been overheard; that his secret had previously been known to his companion, his speech and action had declared. He felt that to pass over all

that had occurred without allusion or explanation, was to betray a guilty shame, an unmanly cowardice; a want of candour, springing from a dread of truth. The place which Lord Sylvester held in Mercedes' friendship, and the kind and generous treatment he had himself experienced from him, rendered Julian far from indifferent to his opinions, and most unwilling to forfeit his esteem. If any thing could retain it after this unfortunate and inadvertent betraval of his hitherto carefully concealed passion, it must be a frank avowal of his weakness; if any thing could render him an object of leniency and compassion, it must be a confession of the anguish which past struggles had cost him. But as reflection realized the fact that secrecy was at an end, hopeless dismay overwhelmed him, and the more plainly he perceived that silence was impracticable, the more firmly sealed were his lips. So lost was he in meditating on how he might best address Lord Sylvester that he forgot that he was all the while beside him, and when he was the first to speak, started at the sound of his voice as if he had thought himself alone.

"That I heard the words you uttered, Mr. Wilmot, and that your secret is in my keeping I need not tell you. That I will keep it truly it is, I hope, equally unnecessary to assure you. But one question I am desirous to ask before we part to-day. Are you sufficiently disposed to accept of me for a friend to give me the privilege of speaking to you again without reserve on this delicate subject?"



With an effort to resume that calmn self-command which he felt to be becom prepared to answer Lord Sylvester; but s overwhelmed by the contemplation of his si he stopped short as he was beginning to and covered his face with his hands. He recovered himself, however, and before L vester could proffer a word of consolation he exclaimed:

"I have had cause enough already to b my folly and my boldness, now I must bl my weakness also. I am little skilled in a lation, my Lord; but an honest pride, a self-above all, the deepest veneration for the scious object of a most presumptuous past these causes had enabled me to draw a vafeelings, not indulged, but irrepressible. If foreseen agitation of a moment has torn a rudely aside, and displayed emotions never to meet the eye of any human being. Of ment from you is at an end; the friendly which you take in Miss Ratcliffe will proba

you to keep in remembrance the discovery which, so unfortunately for me, you have made. If in this point of view it distress you, dismiss it for ever from your mind, my Lord, nor fear that it will ever be so manifested as to cost Miss Ratcliffe a blush of indignation or perhaps a tear of pity. for myself, my Lord, I thank you most heartily for the kind feelings your words have expressed; but here nothing can avail. Of what purpose is counsel to one who confesses himself not amenable to reason? Sympathy is undesired, and impossible; expostulation I fear that I should ill endure. I have no hopes to combat; I indulge in no deluson that ought to be destroyed. If I have awakened compassion in you, spare me any further alusion to this subject. For this day's madness, you cannot blame me more severely than I blame myself."

Julian had spoken at first with tolerable coolness; but as he continued, his agitation became uncontrollable, and Lord Sylvester saw, that however much he might desire to render his friendship of service to the young painter, who appeared to him greatly to need a calm and considerate adviser, this was not the time to force advice upon him. He therefore replied with a tranquillity of manner that assisted to restore Julian to composure:

"With regard to the occurrences of this day, Mr. Wilmot, do not reproach yourself unnecessarily. The most indifferent spectator might have displayed nearly as much emotion in such circumstances; and as to the words you uttered, I be lieve that they reached no ears but mine, and t me they conveyed nothing absolutely new."

Julian regarded him with surprise, and increase dismay.

"Good God!" said he stopping short, an speaking in a voice of the deepest distress, "this possible? Have I more than once betraye what I deemed so impenetrably secret?"

His voice failed him. Lord Sylvester, muc touched, laid his hand on his arm, and said kindly

"Your alarm need not be heightened by m words. I will tell you all I know; and first, learnt this secret only when I was with you yes terday."

Julian changed colour, and replied:

- "When you were with me yesterday there were also present those from whom it is most important to conceal the state of my feelings."
- "But," answered Lord Sylvester, "I have reason to believe that they shared in my discover You told me yourself all that I learnt; but I do not observe that you made the same communication to them."
- "What can you mean?" asked Julian. "Span me this raillery, if such it be."
- "Do you remember," continued Lord Sylvester that you opened a certain portfolio while I standing near you?"
  - "Yes," replied Julian, with confusion.
  - " Perhaps you had forgotten the contents of

or you would have done so less unguardedly. My eye glanced over its leaves without restraint, for, at that time, I was not thinking of secrets. In short. I saw there more than one sketch of Miss Ratcliffe. Even that observation would not have opened my eyes, for her beauty might well impress itself on the memory of a painter; but there was something in the rapid glance you bestowed on them, and in the emotion, even greater than the embarrassment, which the sight of them occasioned in you, that excited a suspicion in my mind, which, once awakened, was quickly corroborated and strengthened by the recollection of things past, and a closer observation of things present. You see what you have to guard against. If a suspicion be once aroused, there will be other eyes upon you that will watch you more narrowly than mine, and whose jealous glances will magnify all they discern, or fancy that they discern. Miss Ratcliffe's friends may also think it incumbent on them to warn her against her present unguarded expression of kindness and interest, on every occasion that interests you-"

"For heaven's sake, my Lord!" exclaimed Julian, "allow me to stop you. You are mistaking me indeed. Do not suppose me mad enough to act so as to incur such observations and provoke such treatment. Nothing short of so unwonted and so horrible an occurrence as that of to-day could becave me of self-command. Never will I distress Miss Ratcliffe by the betrayal of my feelings, nor

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am I so wholly destitute of self-respect as thus ■ expose myself to scorn and reprehension. But am far from allowing that the most high-born ■ her suitors has a right to banish me from h ■ presence. I, like him, may bask in the sunshine • her smiles. Fortune has formed a link betwee us by which I am authorized to seek her side, ar none shall dispute my privilege to serve her."

Lord Sylvester did not make an immediate rply to this vehement declaration. After they h≢ proceeded a few yards, he said deliberately:

"But as you do not appear, Mr. Wilmot, consider yourself entitled to declare your passic openly, let me at least ask why you should disire thus to cherish it secretly? Would there no be superior wisdom in forsaking society so banef to your happiness?"

"No," replied Julian impetuously; "it is truthat I would perish rather than disclose my feetings at this moment. Nevertheless, I entertain intention of discarding them, were such a proceeding possible, which it is not. My homage menot always be contemptible. I have not begun my career so inauspiciously, but that I may low forward to a time when fame shall attend on that is linked with mine in the memorial of those to whom I shall make myself known."

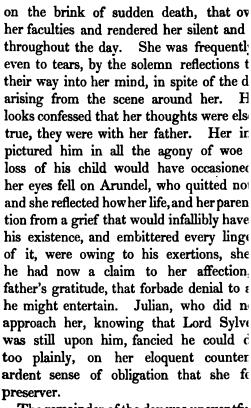
"And for such an idle dream," interrupted Lo Sylvester, "are you, indeed, willing to sacrifice: the peace and happiness of your present life? Sus posing that your works finally procure you:

undying fame, which I grant they may, will that place Mercedes in your reach, even if, long before that time, she is not torn from you by some one possessed of the present tangible advantages of rank and wealth?"

"Your arguments are true," replied Julian with deep emotion. "Nor is it such happiness that I seek or demand. Still believe me that if in order to be happy it be necessary to obliterate her image from my heart, I would refuse to be so. As little would I purchase repose by relinquishing my love, as a soldier would purchase safety by dishonour."

"I can scarcely prolong this conversation now," said Lord Sylvester, drily, "otherwise, it would not be difficult to prove that an adherence to duty in defiance of danger, has not much affinity with the obstinate indulgence of a passion that receives no If you remember how sanction from reason. much I am your senior in years, my opinions may weigh something with you, and, believe me, when you wish to consult them, you shall find me ready to communicate them; but let us not pursue this sublet now." With these words, uttered with decision but without severity, Lord Sylvester quitted his young companion, and joined some others of the party; nor did he again seek to hold any particular conversation with him, though his manner, whenever he casually addressed him, was kind and encouraging; so as not to inspire any dread of having forfeited his friendship, or even incurred his displeasure.

Mercedes had received a shock in finding herself



The remainder of the day was uneventfu tomary giro was taken by our party, and the which it presents at every turn were experted but as these encomiums were chiefly expresame terms employed by the most communication books, and all remarks were made deference to the decisions of former vido to the decisions of the decision of the dec

# CHAPTER XIV.

How fine this tyrant
Can tickle where she wounds!

CYMBELINE.

Yet never could his heart command, though fain, One deep, full wish to be no more in pain. COLERIDGE.

THE effects of the alarming accident which had cast a gloom over the vivacity of the party at Tivoli, extended in their influence far beyond that day. Lady Sylvester would have played very false to her character for skill and discernment, had she failed to perceive, or neglected to turn to account, the various emotions which owed their birth, or their development to that event. expression of the lively gratitude awakened in Mercedes' bosom towards her son, was she saw Only restrained by timidity, and she found that even Arundel's heart had been touched by the imminent peril that had menaced a being so young and lovely. He manifested sufficient interest in her recovery from the shock she had sustained, to afford his mother an opportunity of pointing out with the utmost delicacy, art, and caution, a token of the existence of a sincere love. Nevertheless, Wentworth cooled again so rapidly, s to convince Lady Sylvester that he was still resolved to remain unshackled by any acknowledge bonds.

Withheld from open declarations, the only gan which she was at liberty to play, was that of r presenting by artful insinuations, that the ambigu ties of her son's conduct sprung from compl cated motives; each of which was demonstrativ of his high sense of honour and delicacy of fee ing, and therefore could only heighten the int rest which Mercedes was disposed to feel in hin If he neglected, as he not unfrequently did, whe within the sphere of Mrs. Annesly Marchmont more potent charms, to render her the homag which, at other times, he was the first to pa Mercedes was led by obscure hints to suppor that his generous spirit revolted from an appea ance of paying court to wealth; allusions wer indirectly made to the reluctance with which h would ask her hand of her father, lest the gre millionnaire should misconstrue the eagerness wit which the demand was made: nor was she suffere to remain in ignorance of the aversion which h own haughty and aristocratic family natural entertained to such a mésalliance. At times, Lac Sylvester would betray to her, as if involuntaril the peculiar painfulness and embarrassment of h own situation. Might not Mr. Ratcliffe, idolisin as he naturally did his lovely child, believe that shad eagerly sought to grasp so rich a prize for E son, who was but scantily provided for, and possil suspect her of attempting to gain possession of by stratagem? On the other hand, if regardless

this insulting misconstruction, she yielded to her fond partiality for her young protégée, and to her desire to call her daughter—indignant reproach and censure would undoubtedly be lavished on her by her proud relatives, who would conceive themselves aggrieved by the alliance with a merchant's daughter.

Now Mercedes had a feeling of dignity that led her to expect something more than toleration from any family into which she should enter. Lady Sylvester, after hazarding this last suggestion, saw that she had raised a spirit of rebellion, and checking herself immediately, abstained from pushing this part of her preliminary acting far enough to alarm · Mercedes' pride. But she could not discontinue all this dissimulation so long as her son was obstinately devoted to Mrs. Annesly Marchmont, and so long as she could not prevail On him to come to her assistance, and take some decided step. It was in vain that she forced him to listen to her harangues, and to assent to the Justice of her reasonings; one glance from Mrs. Amesly Marchmont's blue eye, one word of ridicule from her scornful lip, one trifling act of coquetry performed by one so practised, sufficed to defeat her; and the hatred that sprung up between these warring politicians was as fierce as it could have been, had a personal rivalry existed between them, while Mercedes, the original, but always passive cause of all this bitterness was not unfrequently absolutely forgotten by both. Mrs. Annesly Marchmont's imperturbable coolness gave her a decided advantage over her antagonist, who injured herself more than her enemy, by the biting sarcasms and the galling insinuations which she would utter; to all of which her son listened with alternate anger and indifference, and took refuge from her violence in the society of one who received him with unfailing smiles.

The veil that was drawn over these subtle transactions was probably in some measure pierced by the discerning eye of Lord Sylvester, but the inexperienced Mercedes was wholly baffled by the skill employed to blind her. She detected none of their arts, nor could she read aright the mystery of which she felt, but did not see the existence. She began to find herself often unhappy, restless, dissatisfied, but without knowing why; and she sought in the society and instructions of Julian, a solace for her uneasiness and an agreeable diversion from unpleasing meditation.

Could Julian, perceiving her unwillingness to dispense with his services, refuse to render them to her? Impossible! After his first involuntary confession of his passion to Lord Sylvester, his next encounter with him had been attended with sensations of dread, shame and embarrassment; which were, however, quickly dispelled by the continued courtesy of that nobleman's manner towards him, and the warm interest which he still manifested. Julian, though at first inexpressibly relieved by this conduct, soon began to fear that these demon-

strations of friendliness might be designed to lead to open admonitions. He, therefore, carefully avoided any private discourse with him, and by the practice of the most rigid control of every word and action that passed in his presence, trusted to impress his kind monitor with a belief that the cool dictates of reason had conquered the first impetuous ardour which he had betrayed; and that, sensible of the madness of cherishing the hopeless love which he had avowed, he now only sought his patron's daughter with that devoted gratitude which it was scarcely more than his duty to manifest.

By this guarded demeanour, the young painter succeeded in retaining possession of a post fraught with peril without being molested by remonstrances on the folly of thus facing it. Satisfied with having imposed silence on the only friend he possessed, who knew what counsels he needed and felt sufficient interest in him to have proffered them without fear of the risk of offending, Julian pursued the dangerous path he had chosen without further interruption. When not at Mercedes' side, she filled his thoughts; and his fancy was in solitude employed in forming bright visions of the future, such as he had alluded to when speaking with Lord Sylvester, who had cut short his romantic anticipations by reverting to the existing reality.

#### CHAPTER XV.

Perch' io veggio (e mi spiace) Che natural mia dote a me non vale, Nè mi fa degno d' un si raro sguardo, Sforzomi, d'esser tale, Qual all' alta speranza, si conface, Ed al foco gentil ond' io tutt' ardo.

PETRABCA.

Amor mi manda quel dolce pensiero.

Julian was alone, and yet how little alone for he was with his art; that art which was to mould his life, to direct his actions, for they were all to be in subservience to it—to occupy all of time that should be allotted to him—to be the aim and end of thought and study—to embody imaginations—to give utterance to his feelings to bring relief to his swelling heart—to link him not only with his fellow-creatures generally, bet especially to unite him in a sacred fraternity with every child of genius, with every heart that sympathize with the passions he shall portraid with every mind that can comprehend the deed and hidden sentiments he shall reveal, and grassil the meaning of the tales he shall tell. This It was to his passion for his not to be alone. that Julian now owed almost the only happiness

that he possessed. The exercise of it dispelled the gloom of hours of despondency in which he felt oppressed not only by the general sense that "this world is inferior to the soul," and most unsatisfying; but more particularly by the dread, inspired by his present hopeless passion, that "his soul during her confinement in this Prison of the body, was doomed by fate to undergo severe penance:" that he had received a capacity suffer, and not one to enjoy. In such hours he doubted whether happiness be a reality—a Substance not a shadow; doubted whether all past belief in, and anticipation of it had been aught but self-delusions—sweet dreams from which it was bitter to awake! Then he would rise, and Overcoming the repugnance to exertion which he felt stealing over him, numbing his faculties, would approach his easel and begin to paint. He scarcely ever failed to find himself rewarded for an effort, which none but those who have made a similar one will either conceive or appreciate, by tasting an ecstatic delight, increasing till its own strength produced a healthy fatigue,—not a morbid languor—that prepared him to enjoy repose. It was like food and nourishment, imparting new life and vigour to a drooping frame. Then came high aspirations, and inquiries of the silent, sccret, future :

What shall I do to be for ever known, And make the age to come my own?

an eager panting for the time when he shall able to give this question a satisfying answer, nen he shall be able to point to the works of his and, the creations of his mind, and say: there 5 Immortality! His heart throbbed but did he so closely pursue excellence as to despise all that lured him from his onward path? He was prepared

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To scorn repose and live laborious days;

but was he prepared to turn aside from

The form of Mercedes rose before him; her voice that often called him from solitude, her gentlement mandates that summoned him to her side. These fondest dream in which Julian had ever in dulged, was the hope that when he had won celebrity, his homage should impart it to her; that her name should then be enshrined with his, for ever united so closely with it that no lips should pronounce the one, without the heart suggesting that of the other. He resolved that no weak indulgence in the empty pleasures of the present hour, should defer that one for which he looked for his only real happiness on earth.

While he thus thought of Mercedes as of " bright particular star," no selfish passion called her to come down and bless him. He was cont to love her in silence and humility, until that bould come when possibly his love would have wer to confer that undying honour which rank wealth have not to give. When do they, tankes accompanied by better things, transmit a mame to posterity to be reverenced, admired, therished, and conned over? High birth, high station, and boundless riches fail to save their possessors from perishing quickly. Daughters of kings, and mothers of monarchs,

## Madri d'imperatori e di gran regi,

have passed away, and their names are unrecorded. Beauty has indeed often enjoyed a fame that has been handed down to far-distant posterity; but it was because it had found a place in the verse of the poet, or on the canvass of the painter. Yes! it is the poet's love, the painter's worship, that lend it a charm that defies time and decay.

How many women as fair, as gracious, and as Pure as Laura; how many as full of majesty and dignity as Beatrice; how many as high-born and beautiful as Leonora, have passed away and their place knoweth them not; because no Petrarch, no Dante, no Tasso, had loved them! And if "a poet's love is lovely," Julian would not consent to deem that of a painter less so.

While he painted, these quickly thronging thoughts would vaguely fill his mind, half suggesting deeper reflections, then suddenly escaping and leaving apparently no trace behind, changing like the bright and lovely visions of cloud-land. He

was thus musing rather than thinking, when he we startled from his reverie by a voice behind him was that of Lord Sylvester.

"Miss Ratcliffe has sent me to you," he said "she wishes to see you; she has, I believe, proposition to make; one which I advise you t reject."

"Why so, my Lord?" replied Julian with sur prise. "I shall be little disposed to do so, unles you give me very cogent reasons for so ungraciou a proceeding."

"I do not know how you will be disposed unti I see you put to the test; but I know very we how you ought to be disposed. If you do no act accordingly, I confess I shall be surprised a the weakness you will display."

Julian felt a little piqued at this declaration  $\subset$  the part of Lord Sylvester. He continued painting in silence for a moment, and then said:

"Indeed! If the line of conduct I ought ¬
pursue is so very evident, the doubt that you
Lordship expresses as to my adoption of it is rathderogatory to me."

"I distrust you much, I own," returned Los Sylvester.

"You are candid in avowing your want of comfidence, my Lord," replied Julian, colouring.

"I am. Would you wish me to cease to Le so?"

"Certainly not," answered Julian, hastily; and then added: "If you have now sufficiently gratified the passion pour mystifier which I know you to possess, may I ask what this alarming proposition is to be?"

"It is useless to ask me; Miss Ratcliffe exacted promise of secresy before she despatched me. To to her, and hear her explanation; but do not forget my obscure hints which will soon be made intelligible to you. Farewell."

Lord Sylvester departed, and Julian, abashed by the tone between raillery and serious admonition which he had employed, went to seek Miss Ratcliffe, not knowing what to fear, or to hope, or to expect.

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# CHAPTER XVI.

lo dico, e dissi, e dirò fin ch' io viva, Che chi si trora in degno laccio preso, Sebben di sè rede sua donna schira, E in tutto arversa al suo desio acceso; Sebbene amor d'ogni mercede il priva, Poecia che 7 tempo e la fatica ha speso, Pur ch' altamente abbia locato il cuore, Pianger non de', sebben languisce e muore. ARIOSTO.

MERCEDES booked up when Julian entered, an rewarded his prompt obedience to her command by a smiling welcome. Lady Sylvester was writing in a recess at the end of the room. and Merce bid him come to the table at which she was sea

" I sent for you, Mr. Wilmor, and now that are come, you must listen pariently to what I SALIDE .

Is she spoke, she unlarked a writin to say, or rather to read." and drew our a knew which she unfol

- Do not forget, my desired child ment not have River without the Thin rend shoul: Louis I explain that wer species a brackers of some sauce gard of that briefs your mother betieve me Lainter you will. I also desire to have a bust of Ou, and let it be executed by ——. I hear hat he will not generally undertake portraits; but, perhaps, as we were once acquainted, he will not refuse to do yours. I want these two things adorn my new house, and I have so set my heart upon seeing them there, that, whatever else may do, I shall still think it incomplete until they arrive."

As Mercedes read these affectionate and partial expressions, tears filled her eyes though she tried to laugh them away, and blushing deeply as she poke, with an embarrassment which evidently sprang from modesty alone, she said:—

"And now, Mr. Wilmot, I am going to ask You a great favour. I have never seen you execute a portrait, it is true, but your other works do more than assure you of success in such an attempt. I know that if my picture be the production of your hand, that circumstance alone will render it doubly valuable to my father. In short, may lask you to undertake it?"

She paused and then added hastily:

"But I see that I have given you pain. You are either displeased or vexed at my proposal. Why so? Perhaps you think it derogatory to you to undertake a portrait. Forgive a request made in ignorance, and certainly not intended to annoy."

Julian had, indeed, changed colour when her meaning first broke upon him; the whole room swam before his eyes; a sudden faintness overpowered him; but a sense of the danger he warunning—a consciousness that his secret waterembling on his lips—above all, the fear that sawould retract, which her last words awakeness recalled him to his senses, and he replied with the calmness he could resume, and speaking slow with an effort to hide the tremour of his voice:

"Miss Ratcliffe, you do me far too muchonour by such a request. Pardon me if passing sensation of pain overcame me, and in peded an immediate expression of my sense at the favour you confer. I entreat you not to doubt my desire to dedicate whatever power I may have attained to the service of Mr. Ratcliffe, who has been so generously my patron. Yet allow me a little time for consideration before I promise to commence an undertaking in which I could not fail, without experiencing the greatest mortification and grief."

Mercedes looked surprised at the tone of anxiety in which the young painter spoke; and the gratitude which he evinced when he mentioned her father, touched her visibly; but summoning a smile to her countenance, she answered quickly:

"Indeed, we must not enter on this affair with so much solemnity. I have always been told that it is a formidable thing to sit for one's portrait and I shall certainly find it so, if you begin by being so alarmingly serious."

Lady Sylvester now came forward, and throwing the letter she had finished on the table, said:

ill, my dear Mercedes, if you and Mr. have completed your important arrange-I will order the carriage. Let us drive to la Doria Pamfili. The weather is so ingly fine. Mr. Wilmot, will you like to any us? Arundel is gone out riding. r will be with us, I suppose, and he is plad to have you."

n cast an involuntary glance at Mercedes, whether her countenance seconded this in before he replied to it; but she evidently attended to Lady Sylvester's words, and from her with a blank feeling of disapnt, he muttered something about the imty of spending the rest of the day anywhere his studio. As he spoke, Lord Sylvester the room, and catching his last words, the subject of discussion. As soon as lit, he said to Julian:

ell you what we will do. You and I, will start on foot, and we shall reach the fore the ladies will arrive. This plan will more conducive to your health than the confinement in which you delight; nor is to despise such a gift of nature as this av."

the riding party large to-day?" said Merwho was leaning from the open window; e turned her head and fixed her eyes on ylvester as she asked the question.

ery;" replied he, "I saw a grand cortège

at Mrs. Annesly Marchmont's door as I passed and I arrived just in time to see that Arundel wa the fortunate man who assisted her to mount."

Julian saw that Lord Sylvester directed a sinificant look towards his mother, as he spoke the concluding words. Without appearing to regator even to hear them, she left the room; willmot, when he looked next at Mercedes, plain perceived that the colour on her cheek heightened, and she followed Lady Sylvester wi an air of more loftiness than was at all habitual ther.

Julian was allowed no further time for con sidering these not insignificant circumstances for Lord Sylvester taking his arm, led him from the room, and neither of them spoke again, more than a few unimportant words, until they were without the gates. Julian, hitherto, had neither positively believed nor disbelieved the intelligence which Raymond had given him touching the engagement of Mercedes' hand. Whenever the unpleasant recollection of his words entered his mind, he strove to banish it by indulging the fond idea that their assertion might easily be false He had quite as frequently heard from others ? similar declaration with regard to Lord Sylvester and yet as to him, his mind was perfectly at ease The avowed friendship that existed between hin and Mercedes proved that love was unthought of Besides, it was impossible that Lord Sylvester professing so much regard for him as he did should intentionally conceal from him such a fact. Arundel's frequent absence from their circle had always given him satisfaction, and the idea that Mercedes was on the brink of attaining an insight into the cause of this singular behaviour filled his mind with tumultuous emotions of surprise, hope, and joy. The silence these feelings induced he would probably have maintained throughout their walk, had not the thread of his meditations been broken by Lord Sylvester, who speaking abruptly, said:

"Well, have you acceded to Miss Ratcliffe's request?"

The blood rushed up into Julian's brow and temples, as he felt the scrutinizing eye of his friend fixed on him; he did not reply for a moment, and then he said with some indignation:

"Would you have me refuse to make the only return I can make for the favours of my benefactor?"

"Then you have accepted her offer?" continued Lord Sylvester, drily.

"No," replied Julian with some hesitation, "I have not given her an answer. I do not yet know that I can undertake this task. I fear that I am incompetent to succeed, and to fail here—"

"Nonsense," interrupted his friend, "you are perfectly equal to success; but for such success you will have to pay a heavy price."

"You are mistaken. Your arguments are grounded on false premises, believe me," continued

Julian, with agitation. "The irrevocable pas for ever decided my fate, and the future has the power of working a change in me. The little variability in me. Thoughts that enture brain remain there; affections once conce possess my heart for ever. It is on this very racteristic of my nature that all my hopes of a success in my art are founded; you look u vinced. You believe that the power of the virresistible. I know that such is your op I have heard you say frequently: 'Il ya volontés à qui rien ne résiste, parce qu'elles tent à tout.' Even so be it; let me then o confess that I never can, or shall will this ch the necessity of which you urge."

"Nay," replied Lord Sylvester, "if you determined, 'wishing without hope to rest despair,' I have, of course, no more to say."

Julian kept silent for a time, and then said "I do not think that where hope was looked for, despair will intrude. Despair i successor of disappointment, but I have been disappointed, nor do I look to be so that I ask I deem attainable. My sole desire earn fame for myself, which, when mine, I confer upon her. Meantime, she shall know that she possesses my homage, until it be a gift to be desired. This land of poet of painters has afforded many instances of I would accomplish. Leave me to tread in footsteps."

Lord Sylvester scarcely knew whether he was most inclined to smile or to sigh at his friend's romantic design. He saw, however, that his passion would undoubtedly be a spur to his genius, and this hope disposed him to leniency. Still he would not allow his sophistry to pass uncombated; so he resumed the conversation, saying:

"You say that despair supposes the pre-existence of hope. Did Petrarch feel none of the anguish of despair, and yet what did he ever expect or hope?" Julian blushed, for he saw that his monitor had a suspicion that in this poet he had discovered the object of his emulation. Julian did not absolutely fear ridicule; at least his dread of it had no power to make him abandon any design, or modify the expression of any sentiment which he entertained; it could not lessen his candour though it could increase his reserve; he abhorred it still, and shrank from coming in contact with it. supposition that he was now on the brink of exciting derision silenced him for a moment; then discarding this sensation of shame, he boldly contiqued in reply:

"Petrarch experienced both hope and disappointment. He saw Laura, for the first time, in
ignorance that she belonged to another. At that
instant he felt that they were formed to be united
by every band of sympathy and love; and he did
not as yet perceive the barrier that must necessarily
separate them, stretching as it did from one end
of life to the other.

Too early seen unknown, and known too late!

Unhappy Petrarch! he had to learn that he seen Laura too late. Had they sooner met, might, she would have loved him; and he not without a feeling that with her also thought, at once so bitter and so sweet, must present. Laura, like him, must at least have back one look on the past, meditating on ho might have been different."

"This fatal discovery introduced despair into heart, but it only occasionally reigned there. O and holier aspirations brought him peace; perl she came in a mournful, but certainly in a ser mood. And can you believe that he would heen willing to re-purchase the tranquillity indifference, by resigning that subject of a templation which her virtues afforded him, theme of inspiration which he derived from beauty and her excellence? Can you believe the if at the close of his life he had been as whether he would rather have enjoyed existe in insensibility to Laura's charms, or suffered as he did, with a heart and mind engrossed them, he would have hesitated in his choice?"

"Consider what Petrarch owes to that passion which he wanted not friends to represent madness and the folly. They viewed with and regret the shackles which held so noble spirit in thraldom. What they regarded as chains which bound him to earth, they should rather have called the pinions which bore him heaven. It is true that Petrarch was one of the neudite scholars of his age, the reviver of learn

Envoured by princes, honoured by all the great truen, his contemporaries, who had any reputation for taste and knowledge.

"Ages have past and his reputation still lives; thus the sanguine prognostications of his admiring friends are verified: but on what basis does his fame immoveably rest? Not on his laborious works of learning and research; not on that great effort of classic erudition, his Epic poem, which he himself contemplated with so much veneration and delight; not on the elegant Latin Epistles with which he charmed the ears of all the scholars of Europe, and in which, I am sorry to add, he poured forth adulation to the great. I have often heard it lamented that justice is not rendered to him, because all these circumstances which I have enumerated are commonly past over and forgotten. What is it then that is not forgotten? The spontaneous ebullitions of his intimate feelings; the true picture of his own heart; the passionate expression of real grief; the touching confession of natural infirmity. It is when asking for sympathy rather than admiration, that he is sure to awaken a responsive echo. Thus will it ever be! One faithful page from the history of the human heart possesses more interest for our fellow creatures than the most elaborate productions of art. Believe me, had Petrarch been persuaded to sacrifice his love, he would have forfeited his fame also."

Julian paused, but he felt that he had more to may, and he saw that his friend was willing to listen.

YOL I.

"There is something most ennobling to soul in all-enduring constancy such as his. Important the soul in all-enduring constancy such as his. Important in every thing great. Cha may bring with it many advantages, yet as it change, it is an evil. The heart should caref guard against the admission of love for it, becaute degrades its nature. The gifts it bestows the valuable, but they are too dearly purchased they teach us to become wavering and inconsists 'Je tiens la fidélité pour la plus excellente change de ce monde; bonne pour autrui—meilleure posoi." This assertion I once read and have ne since forgotten. Belief in its truth is graven my heart."

Here Julian ceased, and Lord Sylvester for while delayed to reply. He saw how little sober reason of his remarks availed in turning av his friend from his rash pursuit. At length said:

"You started with a demonstration that trach's case and yours were not parallel. Is y conduct then to be similar? Between Miss F cliffe and you, you acknowledge the existence an insurmountable barrier; to you it has b visible from the first:—you say that you have ne deluded yourself with the idea that it was to removed—"

"No, indeed," interrupted Julian, speaking without bitterness. "Wealth and station station between us. To her it would be esteemed deg dation to love me, though it shall be esteen

<sup>\*</sup> Peyronnet, Pensées d'un Prisonnier.

Formidable barrier will then be levelled: I do not look to earn those gifts of fortune in which my rivals are my superiors; and even if in time they were mine, she would then probably be another's."

Lord Sylvester, provoked as well as distressed by the pertinacity with which his friend clung to misery, was proceeding to expostulate further, when the carriage, which was following them, unexpectedly overtook them, and they accepted the invitation which they received to enter it.

Wilmot could not immediately divest himself of the embarrassment caused by the nature of the conversation, which the appearance of her who was the subject of it had alone suspended;—how it might otherwise have terminated he knew not. Perhaps his patron might finally have adopted his views, and consented to the execution of his present design without further remonstrance. Julian knew that his arguments had not yet produced this desired effect, nor was he ignorant that the end of the conversation might possibly have found them estranged from each other perhaps for ever; that the pertinacity of the one, and the obduracy of the other, if declared without disguise, might have rendered any further interchange of friendliness impracticable. The longer he pursued these reflections with candour, the more clearly he perceived that from a prolonged debate, the first result, which would have afforded him so much happiness, was as little to be expected as the

second, which would have given him the se pain, was greatly to be feared. This perce though it led him to rejoice in the interru which had taken place, could not restore hi a tranquil state of mind; he knew not he address Mercedes while Lord Sylvester's eye upon him, and taking refuge in the silence v was too habitual to him, even in their socie excite surprise, he became so engrossed b own thoughts as to be deaf to the convers which they held. Nor was he roused from abstraction until their arrival at the Villa rehim from vague and painful anticipations o future to a sense of the present. The love of the scene around now demanded and obt a share of his attention. The young pair dejection had not been unnoticed by Merc and she strove to win him from it by forcing to remark with her the different beauties which delighted her eyes. They paused to gaze bac St. Peter's majestic dome, with the elegant varied outline of Soracte clearly discernible be-

Lord and Lady Sylvester had on their entremet with a party of friends, but Miss Rat glancing at them, and perceiving that they strangers to her, showed no disposition to them; and Julian found himself walking behavior to the green turf enamelled with anem of every hue, with violets, iris, and orchis, countless other bright flowers, which she petually stooped to pluck. At length they rea

grove of pines, between the lofty stems of which a thousand beautiful vistas caught their eyes. Mercedes needed not to point out to the Painter's observation the majesty of their towering forms, the picturesque character of their rough indented bark, the richness of its ruddy colour, the variety of outline caused by the circumstance of the branches so frequently breaking off near the parent stem, and the gorgeous verdure of their noble heads, illuminated as they were by the golden sun of their country. As they walked to and fro in the stately avenues in which the trees were ranged, Mercedes exclaimed:

"Do you think that Portia's Villa at Belmont, was such an one as this? Do you think that it was on such a bank as the one yonder that the moonlight slept so sweetly? Do you think that it was in an alcove similar to one of those which adorn this garden that she placed the caskets on which her whole fate hung? And that Venus and Cupid, and all the gods and goddesses, and nymphs, and fauns were standing round, as they are here, to watch the course of her destiny? Could not you paint a picture of the scene, Mr. Wilmot? I hope that you feel the same affection for Portia that I feel, and are ready to do her so much honour."

"Let me first," replied Julian, "have the advantage of a few more hints. How shall I represent Portia, Miss Ratcliffe? Have you a model for her? Is she personified in your mind's eye?"

"Oh, yes! most distinctly; and I doubt not. that you will be able to find her prototype among her countrywomen. You should seek it not among the pale, stern Romans, but rather among the fair haired Venetians. She must have a countenance full of frankness and ingenuousness: expansive brow, smooth and polished as marble, presenting to your mind a lively image of truth and purity. Let her eyes be brilliant and piercing, to denote all the quick discernment of her character, and yet melting and even pensive, to express its tender sensibility. She should have a short and curling lip, mocking, but not sarcastic; you might just guess as you marked its curve, 'what a deal of scorn' would 'look beautiful' on it. if provoked by the detection of aught that was mean or base. Enough—I will leave you to furnish what else is requisite. I should like to see the carnation tints I so often hear you talk of, mantle on her glowing cheek, and disappear again as rapidly; but I have already told you more than you can express in one moment of time, for," said Mercedes archly, "painting is not poetry!"

"No," replied Julian, "but your description is. Do not let us lose sight of Portia yet. Your picture has brought her before my eyes with all the vividness of reality. And now I should like to know why you love her so much?"

Mercedes paused to consider:

" How shall I describe exactly why I love her,"

she said. "It is difficult to put our thoughts and feelings into words that convey them clearly to others."

"It is so," replied Julian. "Is the great charm of Portia's character to be found in her superiority to petty emotions of jealousy? Many women rould have shown a doubt of Bassanio's love, or thought to demonstrate the tenderness of their Own, by resenting, or at least lamenting his necessary departure at the moment when he had won her. But Portia did neither. Not a thought of self entered her mind. She was so much one th Bassanio, that his friend was her friend; she experienced the same emotions that he experienced De learning the situation of that friend; her heart and not merely acquiesce in, but actually suggested e same mode of action, that his heart was im-Pelled to suggest, by the violence of the grief and that filled it, on the contemplation of the senerous Antonio's probable fate. But no sooner Bassanio departed, than Portia feels that she is separated from part of herself; her thoughts follow him; she pants to rejoin him, and her ready wit soon furnishes her with the method of gratifying her wish."

"Oh, she is a noble creature!" exclaimed Mercedes with enthusiasm, "and I see that you know her even better than I do. How much I like to meet with those who love and esteem the same characters, be they real or imaginary, that I love and esteem!"

Julian made no reply to this exclamation; he

felt the dangerous delight of such sympathy but too deeply. They walked on in silence till Mercedes stooped to gather a flower, and as she held it in her hand, she said:

"Do you remember a beautiful simile in Coleridge which he must have written, I think, in such a scene as this:

Flowers are lovely; love is flower-like, Friendship is a sheltering tree—

Does not the combination which one views here between these flowers, nature's loveliest productions and the grandeur of these stately trees, strike you imagination, and can you not suppose that it would easily suggest this idea to a poet?"

"Yes," replied Julian, "I can, but you has turned my thoughts wholly to Shakspeare, and was meditating on the more melancholy reflection that occurred to poor Imogen, when lying on the green sward, strewn over with such fair and perishable blossoms as these:

These flowers are like the pleasures of the world."

"Why then," said Mercedes quickly, "it we better not to pluck them, for in the attempt grasp them and make them more our own, we but shorten their already too brief existence. "I best to let them bloom and die their nature death; and you know that though none of the are lasting, still there is a bright succession them with every season; and so no period of is without its enjoyments, agreeable enough to ma

existence cheerful, but too fleeting to have power to bind us strongly to it. Then there is winter, almost bereft of charms, which makes us grow willing to resign this world to enter another where there is a 'fairer earth, a fairer sky.' Then

A calm awaiting seems to be
O'er leaf and wave.
A calm undressing, all so silently,
For calmness of the grave,
Unrepining."\*

Julian listened to her sweet voice with admiration.

"Alas!" he said, "the thoughts suggested to me by that line were far different from your beautiful and healthful ones. I thought of blasted hopes, bitter disappointments, and false friends—"

Mercedes looked grave and thoughtful as she listened to these words; then, not without surprise, she answered:

"Yet why should such dispiriting images occur to you more than to me? You have not yet wrestled with ill-fortune; why is it that the young and the prosperous are not happy? Why have they these dark forebodings, when it seems to others that they should bask in sunshine? We see the shade, but we see not the cloud that casts it. I too experience these feelings sometimes..."

Mercedes and Julian having reached the end of

<sup>\*</sup> Thoughts in Past Years.

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the path they were following, came at once, before the former had finished speaking, on others of the Party Who Were talking and laughing gaily, and maked discondends of the second second discondends. whose lively tones grated discordantly on the en

Lady Sylvester effectually cut short the thr of their discourse by calling Mercedes to her, drawing her arm within hers, continued to of both. with her during the rest of the time that remained in the garden.

#### CHAPTER XVII.

Sworn by your command, Which my love makes religion to obey.

SHAKSPEARE.

Well, Mr. Wilmot, I am to consider that you acceded to my request?" said Mercedes, as parted at the close of the day.

Indoubtedly," replied Julian, though he knew Lord Sylvester heard his words: "if you have determined to honour me so highly; but it me, Miss Ratcliffe, to beg that you will sider the subject, and that if you change mind, you will forget, without hesitation or le, whatever you have said to me, and employ ther painter you may deem better qualified to you satisfaction."

Oh! I am sure that I shall not change my. I am sure that my father will like a picture urs better than one by any other painter." lian drew a little nearer and said in a lower

Of course, Miss Ratcliffe, you will not decide out consulting with your friends; Lord Sylvesor instance, surely you will seek his opinion?" Oh! he admires your works so much. It is nded modesty in you to affect to be ignorant at."

"But," continued Julian, who saw that Lord Sylvester was now out of hearing, "did he recommend me in this instance? Did he suggest the idea of applying to me?"

Mercedes paused before she answered; she feared that her words might mortify the young painter, or even induce him to recede; but her candour forbid her to withhold any part of the truth, and she said:

"No, he did not. The idea was certainly my own; Lady Sylvester agreed with it, and when we mentioned it to him, he said nothing, but when I asked him if he could name any reason for preferring any other painter, he did not do so."

Mercedes' embarrassment was scarcely heeded by Julian, whose mind was engrossed by the conflict between his own strong inclination, and the unwillingness that he felt to act contrary to the opinion of his friend. His desire to ascertain how far his patron's disapprobation of this design had led him, and how far he had declared it to Mercedes had been irresistible. Having effected this, with some secret misgivings and self-reproach, he departed, but he did not retract his consent.

Scarcely had a day elapsed before Merceder sent to ask him when he would put his promise into execution; and this time she employed a very unacceptable messenger, Arundel Wentworth Julian was not without a suspicion that Lord Sylvester had refused to be the bearer of her inquiry he had not seen him in the interval, and he fell guilty of having incurred his displeasure. This

feeling of annoyance rendered him still less inclined than usual to conceal his dislike of the unceremonious manner in which Wentworth commonly addressed him. He replied to his inquiries briefly, saying that he would call on Miss Ratcliffe himself.

"Has Lady Sylvester any engagement that would prevent my admission if I come at eight o'clock this evening? I could bring with me a few designs that I have made, and might perhaps be honoured with the opinions of Miss Ratcliffe's friends before I commence the picture."

Arundel replied carelessly that he could not answer for his mother's engagements, but that he would say that he was coming, and if they could not receive him, he supposed that they would send him a message before the evening. So saying he quitted the room.

Julian returned to the work on which he had been employed before he entered, and which he had put out of sight as soon as he had heard Wentworth's voice. It was a design for Mercedes' Portrait, in which he had not yet afforded himself any satisfaction. He possessed a remarkable facility in drawing from memory, and often, on his return home, would sketch any face which had attracted his attention. We have said that he had already done many such remembrances of that beauty which was the 'tyrant spirit of his thought.' He had never contemplated the countenance of Mercedes, when in repose, without

thinking that in it he beheld a personification all that combined dignity, peace, and tenderness, t

Painters given
Unto their virgin Queen of Heaven.

Peace, indeed, was the characteristic of it. He eyes were of the deepest blue; her skin of the most transparent fairness; but her hair, instead a being of that pale gold which Raphael usual gives to his Madonnas, was of the darkest, richer chestnut; and her eyebrows, of which they are almost wholly destitute, were dark though most delicately delineated. He felt that no painted could hope to portray the bland sweetness and be witching animation of her frequent smile, and it was rather a moment of tranquillity, or even persive thoughtfulness, that he determined to select

Wearied at length, though still unsatisfied, he snatched up his hat, and mounted the Pincian hill to breathe the fresh air, and to see the sun depart in glory.

He was very desirous to find Lord Sylvester, though inwardly half-ashamed to meet him, and not venturing to go in search of him. He was still determined to persist in his first assertion that the course he was preparing to follow by no means aggravated his danger; that the Rubicon having been long since past, it was now immaterial to him to show the better part of valour. As fate would have it, the first person he met was Lord Sylvester, but he was walking with some

brother lords, and Julian thought that he greeted him coldly: he did not for a moment suppose that this circumstance was the occasion of his so doing. Lord Sylvester had too much real dignity to suppose that a peer could degrade himself by a becoming condescension to a painter. Julian felt that he was angry, and he walked sorrowfully on, half penitent and half obdurate, and leaning over the balustrade, gazed down on the busy Piazza below, where men look like ants running to and fro on an ant-hill, and speedily forgot where He had not long indulged this reverie, when some one roused him from it by touching Looking up he saw Raymond beside his arm. him. This sight did not dispose him to be better pleased, for he had lately conceived an aversion to this man, whom, when first he came to Rome, he had allowed to be his companion. His loquacity had become wearisome, and he had more than once taken upon himself to rally Julian on a change in his spirits; he had, however, too much tact to continue a subject which he saw to be unpleasing, and therefore soon abstained from repeating this offence. He had an extraordinary faculty of discovering every body's secrets, of knowing what was passing in the intérieur of every one's family, and of being perfectly informed of the particulars of every occurrence before they were generally known. Now all these accomplishments made him only exceedingly disagreeable to Julian, though they constituted him a favourite with the world at large. He was, however, a man of unruffled good humour, and not easily discouraged in his attempts to gain the confidence of any he attached himself to; so without noticing Julian's face of repugnance, he passed his arm through his, and insisted that he should make the giro of the hill with him.

"What a lucky fellow you are, Wilmot," he began, "every thing falls to you. Why here are you who never executed a portrait in your life selected by the very queen of beauty, selon most, and I, who fag every day at producing dimples where there are only wrinkles to be discovered, and paint roses where none ever bloomed, the soil not being adapted to their growth, am passed over and neglected. Now confess that I am very generous in forgiving you this piece of good luck."

Julian coloured with vexation and surprise, and then inquired where Raymond had obtained his information. His companion stared at the tone of his interrogation, and replied:

"Why, do you suppose that Miss Ratcliffe makes a profound secret of the honour she has conferred?"

Julian saw the absurdity of his question, and again felt embarrassed.

"I only wish that she would do so," he returned, "until the picture be completed. It would prevent the utterance of many impertinent remarks."

"What sort of impertinent remarks do you mean? Impertinent to the artist and his work?

or impertinent to the fair subject?—Inquiries as to who is to be the happy possessor of the picture when completed?—Whose taste will be most deferentially consulted in its progress?—Who determined the choice of the painter?—"

"All that I mean," interrupted Julian impatiently, "is, that now I shall be pestered with the visits of all Miss Ratcliffe's acquaintance, and persecuted with unmeaning criticisms and worthless advice."

"If you are not prepared to meet with such annoyances as these, I advise you not to invade my province; do not commence portrait painter?"

"Can you imagine that such is my intention?" exclaimed Julian with some contempt, and then checked himself, remembering whom he was addressing. His companion, however, seemed insensible of the slight, and replied carelessly:

"Well, you are certainly right to make an exception in favour of Miss Ratcliffe."

"Her father has acted towards me with the greatest generosity, and I feel bound to make him the return in my power."

"Oh! it is at his request that you undertake this picture?"

Julian made no answer, and Raymond continued:

"When you have begun it, I shall come to see You. I have at least greater experience in this branch of our art, and may give you some useful hints."

Julian's gratitude was but faintly expressed, and

### CHAPTER XVIII.

E per più non poter, fo quant' io posso— Ho sì avvezza La mente a contemplar sola costei, Ch' altro non vede; e ciò che non è lei, Già per antica usanza, odia e disprezza.

PETRARCA.

In the evening, Julian, not having received any message to the contrary, collected the sketches he had made, and set out to the Palazzo. He felt very anxious to see whether Lord Sylvester would be present or not. "If he know the purpose of my coming," said he to himself, "and refuse to wait for it, I shall learn that his anger is unabated, and that I have lost a friend. And what a friend!"

Julian walked on in melancholy abstraction; then he inwardly exclaimed: "Yet what would he have me do? How could I refuse such a request? He frequently reproaches me with the folly of my passion, yet what can be weaker than the conduct which, in this instance, he prescribes? Shall I neglect an obvious duty—that of paying the debt of gratitude—from the selfish fear of aggravating my own sufferings?"

Thus justifying the risk he was resolved to run, and determined to show his friend that he con-

sidered himself aggrieved by his coldness, he arived at the place of his destination, and raised trembling hand to the door. The servant, whe answered his summons, looked surprised when she saw him prepare to enter with the undoubting as of one who was expected; and stopping him, she told him that all the family were out. With feeling of astonishment, not unmixed with dipleasure, Julian asked if they had left no message for him?

"Niente!" answered the woman, impatient be gone, and closed the door leaving him to be reflection.

He slowly took up his portfolio and descendent the stairs. The porter smiled as he saw him turn, and said:

"I told you that they were all out, but yewould not listen to me, or you might have sparyourself the trouble of mounting one hundred at three steps to inquire."

Julian, who heard him now, though in his prvious haste he had not been sensible of his address asked if he knew whither they were gone, and hear that they had dined at a house which he knew be occupied by some of their friends.

"They will go to the French Embassy befor they come home, I suppose," added the loquaciou Italian, and Julian resolved that he also would b there.

Wilmot, as he walked homeward, could not con ceal from himself how bitterly he felt this firs

instance of neglect and discourtesy on the part of Mercedes.

"She should not have treated a tradesman or a menial in such a manner," he said; "perhaps my avocation ranks in her esteem scarcely higher. She looks on me as the hired limner at every man's beck, and the haughty Wentworth no doubt rejoiced in the thought of the rebuff I should meet with at their door, while his brother will deem it a salutary check to my presumption."

Having, by the due indulgence of such thoughts as these, roused up a sufficient degree of angry pride to bear him with dignity through the evening, and after repeatedly representing to himself the abject folly of continuing to seek one, who already began to treat him with scorn, Julian set out to the French ricevimento with the sole purpose of being again in her presence.

As soon as Wilmot entered the room, he looked around for the group he sought, and he quickly discovered it. Wentworth was, it is true, at Mercedes' side, but the graciousness with which both she and Lady Sylvester welcomed him, at once banished the idea of their having intended to wound his feelings by their neglect, and Mercedes' first smile convinced him how very ridiculous it had been to interpret such a trifling act of forget-fulness into a serious affront. He now felt heartily ashamed of all the angry sensations which a few minutes before had appeared to him so spirited and so just.

So entirely did Miss Ratcliffe seem to have forgotten everything respecting his useless visit, that at length, finding some of his former indignation reviving, and profiting by the removal of Arundel from his station to place himself near here, he ventured to allude to his disappointment, saying:

"Perhaps if you will yourself appoint a time to see me, I may be more fortunate than I was in the selection of my own hour."

"What do you mean?" asked Mercedes, "when did you wish to see me?"

"Did not Mr. Wentworth tell you that I intended to call this evening if you were disengaged?"

"No, indeed," replied Mercedes, but with an air that showed that she did not suppose such an omission could be seriously resented by any one. "I dare say that he forgot all you said to him. But," she added, seeing an expression of vexation pass over Wilmot's countenance, "I am really very sorry that this mistake should have occurred; he shall certainly make us all proper apologies for his carelessness."

Julian had still a question that he wished to ask Mercedes, and with a little hesitation he communicated to her an idea that had that day occurred to him.

"Do you not think, Miss Ratcliffe," he said, "that your picture would perhaps afford greater pleasure to Mr. Ratcliffe, if in it you wore the cos-

tume of your mother's country? He dwells so frequently on your resemblance to her—will you suthorise me to select it?"

Mercedes did not reply for a moment; when she spoke, her eyes were swimming with tears and she said in a low voice:

"Yes. I thank you for the thought, and for every thought you have, the object of which is to give my father pleasure. I am grateful to you for your gratitude to him. There seems to be a law between your family and mine, that we shall still be giving and receiving."

#### CHAPTER XIX.

Je n'aime pas les faiseurs de remonstrances. Vous tournez les choses d'une manière qu'il semble que vous avez raison. J'avais les plus belles pensées du monde et vos discours m'ont brouillé tout cela.—MOLIÈRE.

On the following morning, Julian's first waking thought was the appointment he had made, and he looked forward to the fulfilment of it with anxiety.

Our young painter, before his arrival in Rome, had led a life of great seclusion, mixing little with the world, and very rarely encountering any who were much more versed in it than himself. His tastes and pursuits were such as inclined him rather to solitude than to society, and during his residence in the country in England, the few companions of his own age that he possessed, could neither share in his occupations and pleasures nor in any way promote them. His father had bestowed on him an excellent education, and ill able to meet unnecessary expences had availed himself of the nowledge which he possessed, and of the sill in communicating it gained by experience, (the early years of his own life having been, 28 we have already said, devoted to tuition), to prepare him for admission at the University, having entertained a hope of seeing him embrace the same profession as his own, which hope he only relinquished in consequence of the rapid, and surprising development of Julian's rare talent for the art of painting.

An ardent taste for literature had induced Julian, in spite of his passion for his favourite art, to devote more hours to the pursuit of it than are often bestowed in youth, by many who afterwards reap academical honours; and having no particular aim in view, no goal to which he was bound to press with eager haste, he acquired more general knowledge, and more true cultivation of mind than those who are thus circumscribed in their studies. The tender affection which he entertained for his mother led him to pass much of his time in her society; with her he culled the flowers that adorn the lighter branches of literature. He entered the regions of poetry, and became well acquainted with all the best authors of his own country, and of modern times.

But while in such attainments as these he far surpassed those of his age in general, in that premature acquaintance with the world and its ways, which a public education can scarcely fail to bestow, he was remarkably deficient. In consequence he frequently knew not what mode of conduct to look for in others, nor was able to detect the real motives of their actions. It is true that his acute

sensibility, and ready sympathy rendered him peca liarly alive to all emotions experienced by person who were objects of interest to him. He readi divined what they would think and feel, thous not always what outward expression they wou allow themselves to give to their thoughts and fee ings. His unaccustomed eve could not always pe netrate the veil of reserve, which usually shade the face of truth. He had still to learn that it is only falsehood that presents her unblushing from to the gaze of all spectators, and that those feelings, motives and desires, which are avowed are not likely to be the real ones; for though Julian was himself reserved, the reserve and bashfulness to which his nature was prone, and which his situation strengthened, were in him productive only of habitual silence, and never incited him to profees false sentiments. Emerging as he did from strict retirement, he was averse to give open expression to thoughts which were the offspring of solitary musings, and as yet untested by comparison with those of other minds; and ill prepared to maintain against opposition opinions which were nother deduced from functful theories, than from keen observation. But when he directed his attention to their who were explicated by commuminn with the wirkly and who lived in voluntary and careful observers to its laws, then again he was buttled; consistented by his ignorance of the princiwho that were their rule of conduct, of the interests

the objects of their eager pursuit, and sures which they deemed solely worthy He was also unaware how much act and language are modified by conorms, and how much there is that is umed as are our garments, according to 1 of the day, and the necessity of the ven by many whose honour and rectire not to be doubted, whose sincerity in may be relied upon, and whose principles nwarped. Ignorance of this fact occan more difficulty in reading Lord Sylaracter than that of any other near him. 1 and his mother soon became objects ; from the former he looked for nothing noble, and the latter he suspected to be and more designing than her son; but eatly perplexed when he sometimes obrd Sylvester, whom he highly esteemed, many things that contradicted his preideas of his character.

n the present instance, he thought that n's open declaration of disapproval of ct could not end where it began. He exit if he persisted in pursuing the conduct adviser had represented as so objection-ould undoubtedly be at the expense of his. He looked for a calm but inflexible deon of displeasure. Nevertheless on his the Palazzo, Julian saw Lord Sylvester group, from all of whom he received

were the objects of their eager pursuit, and pleasures which they deemed solely worthy desired. He was also unaware how much onduct and language are modified by conal forms, and how much there is that is assumed as are our garments, according to hion of the day, and the necessity of the t, even by many whose honour and rectiserve not to be doubted, whose sincerity in nip may be relied upon, and whose principles l unwarped. Ignorance of this fact occahim more difficulty in reading Lord Sylcharacter than that of any other near him. orth and his mother soon became objects ust; from the former he looked for nothing and noble, and the latter he suspected to be dly, and more designing than her son; but greatly perplexed when he sometimes ob-Lord Sylvester, whom he highly esteemed, say many things that contradicted his preed ideas of his character.

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a friendly greeting; and found that when referred the by Mercedes, he did not decline entering into all the discussions that followed with ready interest, and was his opinion that finally decided the selection the design for the proposed picture.

Julian was greatly relieved by this behaviour; but at the same time so much surprised by it, that in accordance with the ingenuousness of his temper, he determined to seek the earliest opportunity of addressing his patron once again on the subject, in order to ascertain what change had taken place in his view of it, since they had discussed it with such widely differing opinions.

The desired opportunity occurred on the evening of the same day, when Julian at the entrance into the Borghese gardens met Lord Sylvester alone-He paused to see whether his companionship would be sought or avoided, and his friend immediately joined him. Julian was too much occupied by the design he had formed to be able to enter freely into conversation; at length he began to fear that Lord Sylvester would remark his abstraction, and receive fresh offence from it. He therefore determined to declare its cause, particularly as they had now entered one of those long ilex avenues, the profound shade and total seclusion of which render them so well adapted for private conferences. After having duly considered every possible way of ap proaching the subject, he finally commenced with an abruptness which made his companion start.

"Surely, he said, "I may believe that I am no

longer so much the object of your Lordship's disapprobation as I was a few days since?"

"To what do you allude?" asked Lord Sylvester dely.

"You cannot have forgotten that you expressed such a feeling, in no very measured terms, with regard to my intention."

"Oh! with respect to Miss Ratcliffe? Why should that disapprobation be lessened? aware of no change in the then existing circumstances. What I thought then, I think now; but I know not why it should avail to say again what I have already said uselessly. I intended, Mr. Wilmot, to act the part of a friend, in expressing to you distinctly, and without keeping back any portion of it, my opinion of the conduct you told me it was your purpose to pursue. My words did not shake your determination. You will not, I appose, call for a repetition of arguments which you deemed without force. You are resolved to dopt your own measures. You are certainly at herty to do so. It is true that you are young and inexperienced, and that I have ceased to be These are facts which other in the extreme. must be allowed, nor am I aware that they contain aything to offend, though I feel your arm twitch im-Patiently. I admire your talents; I like your truth, and your enthusiasm interests me. I do not intend to lose sight of you, nor shall I cease to endeavour to serve you, because I find you, in one instance, hadstrong and mistaken. Nevertheless, you can

rights of friendly expostulation, he might hav e resented his conduct in turn. But now he was reduced to absolute silence, and endured all time humiliation of beholding himself an object of pi to one whom he highly respected. He would rather have been blamed than thus compassionate. He felt degraded; he saw that he had sunk = n Lord Sylvester's estimation, and that he consider his weakness not inferior to his wilfulness. source of doubt and difficulty was, however, moved by this conversation; he now knew t he footing on which he stood with Lord Sylveste ; he also felt that he had been treated with conscending kindness, and a consideration that would have been shown him by few, thus elevated above him in rank. He was at a loss how to reply; length with an air of somewhat proud humila ty, he acknowledged the sincere pleasure it gave ha im to find that he was permitted to retain his friemedship, and remarked that the future would prove whether he had acted too rashly, or whether Lord Sylveter's frans were two easily excited. This was the conclusion of their discourse.

Lady Sylvester was now informed that it would be requisite for the young beiress to pass many hours in the painter's studie to afford him time to account his pirture. She immediately resolved that she would not incommode berself by attendance there; she had bethe disposition to allow her time to be broken; in upon or her pleasures made by Mercedes.

s selfish unconcern for all that did not erself was not meant to be visible to the ler young companion, and she hastened re her a fitting chaperone in the person lderly lady, Mrs. Pembruge. Having her to accede to her wishes, she comd her arrangement to Mercedes, pathering as its reason that to frequent a studio oil painting was being executed would destroy her. Mercedes could not, of onsent to be the cause of so much suf-

reliminaries being now adjusted, those s hours began which were to rob Julian maining peace, but which were too delightful used to let him recognize until they ended, it of the injury they inflicted.

when the wound is stiffening with the cold, warrior first feels pain.

## CHAPTER XX.

Periglioso è cercar quel che trovato Trastulla, sì, ma più tormenta assai, Non ritrovato.

C'est ordinairement où l'on décide le plus qu'on prouve le moins; quoiqu'on réponde à toutes les difficultés, on en résout très peu.—GIRARD.

LORD SYLVESTER frequently accompanied or followed Mercedes to the painter's studio. Whether it was that he was really interested in the progress of the portrait, or whether he thought that as his mother and his brother rarely visited them, and Mrs. Pembruge, poor woman, was so afflicted with deafness as to be scarcely able to join in the conversation without the use of a trumpet, and thus, these interviews were too nearly approaching to telle-à-telles for his young friend to enjoy them safety; be the cause what it would, his present there was frequent, and appeared highly agreeal to all.

Mercedes began to find that, during the hours time past more pleasantly than in any oth of the day; she had, of late, she scarce knew we perceived it to hang heavily on her hands. Merches was very young, and her character, as

undeveloped to others, was also a secret to herself. She was far from analysing or examining with much doseness the origin of feelings of indefinable longing that filled her bosom, and which were in truth yearnings after a sympathy which did not exist for her, among those whom she had ignorantly elected her friends; but it was impossible for her to disguise from herself that she was rapidly ceasing to taste the same joyous happiness which had been her's a short time before. A depression of spirits existed for which she could not account, but of which she was painfully sensible. She could not say: "here is my pain;" but there was a sickness of heart that passed not away, and of which she almost lost the recollection when conversing with Julian and his friend; discussing with them topics which not only afforded her mind occupation at the moment, but led her on to seek the attainment of more knowledge, and furnished her with themes for future thought and study.

Being also gifted with real taste, she could not, in spite of her disquietude, cease to derive a most lively pleasure from visits to the scenes of well-deserved celebrity by which she was surrounded, and from the contemplation of those glorious works of art, which never fail to reward those who are constant and unwearied in returning to seek their presence, by fresh disclosures of beautics previously unobserved. Each visit reveals new charms, and as the spirit of their beholder becomes

more and more embued with the same spirit the first created them, draughts of pleasure, of dan increasing sweetness, are drunk at the spring inspiration. These delights might have cheen the most deep-rooted melancholy; they general dispelled the passing clouds that darkened Mccedes' serenity.

At the hour when the sitting terminated, Lad Sylvester would call for Mercedes, who frequently communicated to Julian their projects for the remainder of the day, and often invited him to follow them to any spot of peculiar interest which they were about to visit. With her usual unhesitating frankness, she did not conceal from the young painter the satisfaction which she derives from the intercourse between them.

"How agreeable," she one day exclaimed, when Lord Sylvester also was present, "are the hour that I spend here! I am always sorry when me sitting comes to an end. Tell me, if you can why in society conversation is generally so dull We render ours very interesting, at least to our selves who hold it, by selecting subjects that affor us mutual pleasure, instead of repeating unprofit able, wearisome gossip of the day, composed anecdotes, generally ill-natured, for the truth a which none can vouch, and those who con descend to repeat them are, for the most par incapable of giving them a foreign charm by the wit with which they tell them. What is wor

that these topics, so destitute of any ndation, seem inexhaustible; they meet where. But for my part, I assure you I by thoughts that appear to me very new, but am afraid to utter them, and this spired by that which I discover in others, y every one has sufficient individuality to nething original, though the contributions might be but small, and yet that somey never venture to offer, and I dare not old."

ou say," replied Lord Sylvester with a here does appear to be a species of false in the world which prevents even those, other respects, we should be inclined to y arrogant, from ever daring to appear in ural colours. They would not for a present you with themselves; borrowed sentiments are all they offer. But I need that some of them are justly punso doing. 'Ils perdent par calcul le'ils auraient obtenu par nature.'"

'answered Mercedes, "conversation would ord a diversity for which all would be

Originality in one would be productive another. One new thought always sugther, for though memory and art may sted, nature cannot. Do you know," d, after a pause, "that I imagine that nust be more agreeable to people who her very decided tastes, nor pursuits, than who have."

"Why so?" asked Lord Sylvester, who fond of eliciting Miss Ratcliffe's sentiments.

"I fancy that you find more amusement society than Mr. Wilmot does. Your mind m be more free than his can be, to adopt the sugg tions of other minds; and can more readily foll any turn that conversation takes."

"Because," said Julian, "Lord Sylvester is markable for his various information."

"Exactly in accordance with what I mear replied Mercedes quickly. "A person who do not greatly prefer one thing to another, wornaturally acquire something of all. I have off seen Mr. Wilmot silent, abstracted, and eviden perfectly uninterested, until some remark was mathat related to his beloved art; then, indeed, countenance becomes animated, and he joins the conversation with every appearance of a delight. Lord Sylvester, on the contrary, see only to experience a certain agreeable pleasure equally felt while very different topics are being discussed, and which a change of subject deposit greatly heighten or diminish."

High Lord Sylvester and Julian smiled at a description of themselves which neither allowed be at all in their invent. Julian asserted the if just, it proved him to passess a very name to be thus filled with one likes to the exc all others.

n have absolutely devalued." Lord Sylves
"that I am describe of a spark
the the state of placed andifference with

you attribute to me, certainly is not demonstrative of its existence. You deem me eminently fitted to shine in that style of conversation, which, Hazlitt says, is now becoming nearly universal, and describes as 'a dull compound of politics, criticism, chemistry, and metaphysics."

"No, not necessarily dull," replied Mercedes; "give me your metaphysics, and Mr. Wilmot your criticism, and neither of us will call you dull. But, seriously, I think that criticism is your true province, for I have a conviction that to exercise an art absolutely disables one from criticising it. It is necessary to the existence of judicious criticism that there should be a class of people possessed of real taste and extensive knowledge, but free from that besoin de faire that produces painters, versifiers, musicians, and all other artists. Will you give me your support in this opinion, Mr. Wilmot?"

"I should like to hear why you hold it," answered Julian.

"Let me consider a little, for I find it difficult to express exactly what I mean, and often say nearly the contrary of what I intend."

"The reason of your opinion may be this," said Lord Sylvester, "you probably think that jealousy incapacitates artists for giving, if not for forming just judgments of works of art produced by their fellow-labourers. Remember Titian's envy, and how he indulged it, even with regard to his own brother, whom he dissuaded from attempts which he saw would rival his own."

"That is not the cause of your opinion, is it Miss Ratcliffe?" asked Julian.

"No-I leave every approach to satire to Lord Sylvester."

"Yes," replied Julian, "you are too much in earnest when you speak to be satirical."

"Why will you not say, too little malicious? After this digression I have still to tell my meaning. Though I do not believe that you could be envious, neither do I think that you would be impartial. I feel that painters would be more mercifully disposed one towards another than the critic, however candid, would be towards them. Being much more sensible of the difficulties that had been encountered, you would esteem any degree of success, though falling far short of excellence, more highly than others are prepared to do. It may certainly be very laudable to come near the mark, but still the prize ought not to be obtained without hitting it."

"But surely a judicious critic should be alivetto all the grades of excellence?"

"Undoubtedly, but might not a painter be too much so? Nor do I think that a person whe exercises an art, is always quite disposed to point out precisely where the difficulty really lies on account of his feeling of insecurity as to whether he shall overcome it with more perfect success, when he attempts it himself; he would not declare with openness exactly how, and where, and why, the painter he was examining had failed. In discussing 8 all these questions, he would feel that he was fur

nishing weapons against himself, while the critic would decide them with unscrupulous temerity, knowing that he could not be taxed with falling short in his practice of his own precepts."

"How did you acquire so deep an insight into all these motives and feelings?" asked Lord Sylvester with a smile.

"Ah! you wish to laugh at my discourse, rather than to agree with it. Do you not believe, Mr. Wilmot, that I have arrived at some truths?"

"Undoubtedly I do, for it seems to me that I have felt what you describe."

"So have I in a degree, just enough to occasion to find it out," said Mercedes; "and these emarks have led me to a discovery of the existe of a great analogy between moral philo-Thy and the art of painting. I am sure much struction might be derived from following it up, which opinion I have been strengthened by my andy of a book of yours, Lord Sylvester, which knew must be worth stealing, from having bserved your fondness for it. I mean Boyle's ecasional Reflections. If he can say so much at is wise and beautiful on the occasion of 'giving dog some meat,' or of 'being carved to at a feast,' am sure that a student at his easel might find scope for quite as profound reflections, if he knew well how to make them. Some day you shall see such a volume proceed from my pen. I will dedicate it to you, Mr. Wilmot, and bring it to you to be revised."

"I have often thought of writing the Miseric of the Studio, but never the Moral Reflections, replied Julian, as he obliterated with an air of disgust some of the touches he had most carefull executed.

"I greatly prefer your idea, Miss Ratcliffe," sai Lord Sylvester; "but I really think that the ded cation ought to be to me, as my book suggeste your design, and also, I assure you, I fear that th author you so warmly commend is far too rations for an imitator of his to please Mr. Wilmot."

"Too rational!" exclaimed Mercedes. "Is i possible that Mr. Wilmot is less rational than am? Do you really think it likely that I shall be too rational to please him?"

Lord Sylvester smiled at this question and then said: "L'esprit n'est pas incompatible avec un peu de folie, and still less so is genius."

"Your compliment is so ambiguous," exclaimed Mercedes laughing, "that Mr. Wilmot will not acknowledge it. Yet, I think, in spite of its little praise, he might receive it gratefully, for he never pays any himself; at least not to the living. On the dead, he will waste the most enthusiastic effusions!"

"Yes," replied Lord Sylvester; "and to return once more to our first subject, you must allow, Miss Ratcliffe, that though painters may not be qualified to excel in criticism, they are certainly capable of deriving tenfold more pleasure that any other beholder can, from the contemplation

picture. Critics may gaze long and but in comparison with them, with how eye!"

no more; you do but remind me how wy Mr. Wilmot the power of admiring seen him admire. A power we ask in ry, cold, learning to bestow is to be only with a portion of kindred genius; at we can only 'see, not feel' the beauty works which he will rival!" exclaimed her face beaming with enthusiasm like was describing. She paused awhile ly, and then with some timidity she addressing Julian:

you ever read Gessner's description of an When he says: 'There is no celebrity ist, if the love of his art do not become nt passion; if the hours he employs to : be not for him the most delicious hours ; if study become not his true existence irst happiness; if even in the night-time of his art do not occupy his vigils or his f in the morning he fly not to his work, to recommence what he left unfinished.' is passage some mornings ago, and it ned impressed on my memory ever since, thought it must be so exact a descrip-1. Mr. Wilmot. Am I mistaken?" And d towards Julian with an earnestness parrassed him, and waited for his reply. have known all these feelings, have you repeated.

"I have," replied Julian, raising his eyes her face as she spoke.

"I think that I have also," added Merced thoughtfully and timidly, "and yet I am no genius. And," she continued after a pause, speaking with a bright, sunny smile, expressive of, and infusing hope, "remember and believe what Gessner says:— 'these are the marks of him who labours for glory, and for posterity.'"

Julian listened with joy to this promise of success made by Mercedes' lips; but they were both recalled from their pleasant réverie by the voice of Lord Sylvester, who said:

"You have been talking poetry in prose. Now I will talk it to you in verse, and repeat some lines of Coleridge which, I know, will well accord with your sentiments:—

We may not hope from outward form to win
The passion, and the life whose fountains are within.
Oh! Lady, we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does Nature live:
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud!
And would we aught behold of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless, ever anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the earth—
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element."

Is not this beautiful?"

"Beautiful!" responded Julian and Mercedes.

"Stop, there is more of it:

tı

We in ourselves rejoice!

And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colours a suffusion from that light."

Lord Sylvester ceased, and before Mercedes could speak again, (for she was one who was silenced when her feelings were touched, as they were by all that was beautiful,) Mrs. Pembruge, having read Galignani's Messenger three times over during the course of the sitting, remarked that she saw Lady Sylvester's carriage enter the court. A discourse ensued on the progress which Julian had made, and then Mercedes and her companions departed.

## CHAPTER XXI.

Non può far Morte il dolce viso amaro: Ma'l dolce viso dolce può far Morte. PETRABCA.

One day Mercedes, having quitted Jul studio, drove through the streets of Rome Lady Sylvester, every moment encountering s work of beauty and of fame. As they were wit any definite object of pursuit, she proposed as passed the church of St. Cecilia in Trastever enter it, giving as a reason for her wish:

"I have heard that Maderno's statue is lovely, and I think I must take home one of t small copies of it in marble which can be ha the original equals my expectation."

On their entrance into the church, they ceived an artist apparently employed in drathe work they were come to see.

"Ah!" exclaimed Mercedes, "there is Mr. mot, I see he is making a study. How gl am to find him here! I will ask him to be cicerone."

And she crossed the church to the place we he was standing. No sooner did he perceive than he laid aside his work and approached altar with her. The recumbent figure of the standard s

is said to be in the attitude in which she was found lying after she was slain.

There is something in this statue so simply pathetic, so touching, and so sad, that they both gazed on it silently, and with full hearts. Mercedes felt strongly reminded of Byron's description of the first day of death, and she almost unconsciously repeated in a half audible voice the lines:

He who hath bent him o'er the dead Ere the first day of death is fled: The first dark day of nothingness-The last of danger and distress; Before decay's effacing fingers Have swept the lines where beauty lingers, And marked the mild angelic air-The rapture of repose that's there. And—but for that cold, changeless brow, Where cold obstruction's apathy Appals the gazing mourner's heart, As if to him it could impart The doom he dreads, yet dwells upon— Yes! but for this, and this alone, Some moments, ay, one treacherous hour, He still might doubt the tyrant's power, So fair, so calm, so softly sealed, The first, last look by death revealed!

The statue is hewn from a block of the purest marble, unsullied by a single stain; its spotless whiteness adds to the modest grace of the recumbent attitude, and of the shrouding folds of the drapery. One delicate, snowy foot is revealed to view; her hands also are stretched forth on the pavement, while the head and face, which are

turned away, are completely enveloped in her It would be possible to gaze upon her, and t "she is not dead, but sleepeth!" It would b sible to wait beside her for the hour of wakin that the lifelessness of the fair hands, lying h on the ground, their slight wrists cruelly I together with a thick cord, and the unsightly drawn across that bending throat, tell us the died of pain! The bare idea, thus suggested corporeal sufferings were ever inflicted on a so lovely, and so feminine, oppresses the hear anguish.

Mercedes was alone with Julian, for Ladvester was exploring the church, accompanithe garrulous old man who showed it. Habeen otherwise, she would not have suffered out a struggle, the tears to fall 'so feelingl fast,' as she leant over the balustrades which rated them from the statue.

She was not long unmolested. Another came round the spot, all loudly uttering su marks as they were disposed to make. Me withdrew in haste from the group, and so Julian.—

"Let me come and look at your drawing."
He followed her, guessing her motive, and
ing her request. She took the sketch int
hand, and looking up, said,

"I believe you are the only person here would not tax me with folly and weakness. in this, perhaps, I am mistaken," she said,

interpreting the silence which Julian maintained. "Some," said Mercedes, her cheek crimsoning at the thought of the imputation, "would accuse me of affectation."

"That is an unworthy folly," exclaimed Julian, eagerly, " of which I never yet saw you guilty."

"I have feigned sometimes," replied Mercedes, thoughtfully; "but then I did not feign to feel: but not to feel. Mr. Wilmot," she exclaimed, after a brief silence, summoning up a smile, although—

Upon her cheek the stain did sit
Of an old tear, that was not washed off yet.

"You are, I am afraid, a bad companion for me; you encourage me in a sort of melancholy that I should quickly shake off in other society; and in the indulgence of thoughts that I never dare to express to any one else. I think you do me harm."

These were Mercedes' parting words to the young painter, for Lady Sylvester was now ready to quit the church, and she hastened to follow her.

The next day as Mercedes quitted Julian's studio, she told him that they were going to visit the church of San Gregorio sul Monte Celio.

"We must see," she said, "the splendid frescoes which adorn it. Besides, the remembrance of our national obligations to the saint should make us pay him a visit, and we shall behold the chair on vol. I.

which he sat, the bed on which he lay, and the table at which he entertained an angel."

On the arrival of Mercedes and her friends, the found the painter already there, on the steps the lead up to the church, gazing on the magnificent view which that position commands of the ruins the Palace of the Cæsars. They all paused to look for awhile on the melancholy scene, which can never be described in words more faithful than those employed by Byron, the truth of whose epithets cannot be sufficiently admired and appreciated by any who have not tested them, by comparing them on the spot with the scenes which gave them birth.

Cypress and ivy, weed and wall-flower grown
Matted and massed together—hillocks heaped
On what were chambers—arch crushed—column strewn
In fragments—choked up vaults, and frescoes steeped
In subterranean damp, where the owl peeped
Deeming it midnight. Temples, baths, or halls,
Pronounce who can; for all that learning reaped
From her research, hath been—that these are walls!
Behold the Imperial Mount! 'tis thus the mighty falls!"

As their principal desire was to see the beautiful frescoes that decorate the three chapels built by St. Gregory, and standing apart from the church and from each other, in the garden, they now entered the first which is dedicated to St. Silvia, the mother of the saint.

Mercedes was enchanted with the beauty of th angels with which Guido has decorated the ceilin above the altar. "Look," she exclaimed eagerly to Julian, "at the loveliness of these angelic beings! I believe that every one before and since the time of Icarus has felt a desire to become possessed of the power of flight, (I suppose that they might flee away and be at rest) but I never felt it so strongly as at this moment. If I can ever meet with an ingenious artist who is willing to make an attempt to gratify my wish, I shall beg him to come hither to study these exquisite examples of what wings ought to be."

On proceeding to the second chapel, the terrible solemnity of the subjects there portrayed, and the sublimity with which they were expressed, checked the gaiety which Mercedes had hitherto felt. As she stood before those wonderful productions of rival genius spurred on by immediate emulation, the pictures of Guido and of Domenichino, representing the Flagellation and the Crucifixion of St. Andrew, she felt silenced and awed by the thoughts naturally excited by a contemplation of the almost living representation of the holy Apostle's sufferings, and she drew nearer to Julian, not disposed to speak herself, but willing to hear the remarks of one whose sentiments always harmonized with her own

As they neither of them spoke, Lord Sylvester broke silence by saying:

"Well, Miss Ratcliffe, have you decided as to the respective merits of the two rivals? Which of these pictures do you prefer?"

"I am lost in admiration of both," replied Mercedes, starting; "indeed, I had almost forgotten that they were pictures; at least, I was not thinking of their merits as paintings at the moment you spoke."

"Look," said Julian, who had listened to her, pointing to Guido's picture of the procession of the Saint to the place of his Crucifixion; "look, I entreat you, for a moment on the countenance of this woman who is seated on the ground. If she be not already a convert, she will be one. The expression of her face declares more forcibly than words, that these brutal acts of cruelty are illcalculated to exterminate, or even to check the progress of the opinions of those on whom they are perpetrated. She gazes on the saint with the most lively pity, and the most earnest desire to see whether he will endure to the end. an air of lofty indignation does her whole figures and attitude express! If she were not a feeble woman she would spring to her feet, and contendant with the fierce soldiers who are violating the reverence which they owe to that grey-haire old man, when dragging him onward to destruction "

"Now," said Julian after a brief pause, for he saw that the rest of the party were hurrying our, "let us turn and look at the spectators that Domenichino has introduced into his representation of the previous Flagellation of the Saint. Do you see this young child clinging to his mother in

a very agony of terror? The scene of horror that he is witnessing is incomprehensible, but most terrible to him; yet, a strange fascination incapacitates him from turning away his eyes from it. Perhaps it is that the mild and heavenly countenance of that suffering old man endears him to that tender infant heart, and his interest is as fully wakened as his fear, which is soothed by the Presence and protection of his mother. Perhaps at this moment the seed of future martyrdom is being sown in his breast, and in this scene of bloodard is being trained a soldier who shall combat for, and win an imperishable crown."

Such were the remarks that Julian's enthusiasm could lead him to pour forth; but whenever uttered, was in a manner so wholly unobtrusive, that those who valued them were forced to be on the watch to catch them as they fell from his lips. Mercedes was well content to pay this tribute, but she left him now, for she had already contents aved her companions.

The following day Julian went to the Vatican, and on his entrance into the first gallery he found Lord and Lady Sylvester, Mercedes, and several more waiting for admission into the library. He stopped as he past, and received an invitation to be of their party. On entering, they were charmed by the first coup d'æil of the magnificance and vastness of the saloon, the extreme freshness of the paintings which decorated the walls, and the fine vista formed by the long gal-

leries that ran from right and from left, to the uninterrupted length of four hundred feet. The noble granite tables supported by bronze figures of excellent workmanship; the beautiful china, the classic vases of Greece and Etruria, and the rare curiosities that were displayed to them, all excited their admiration; they surveyed with some interest the fresco painting of Zuccari, covering the pilasters that divide the room and the arches over the windows, which are both equal in number. Nothing can be more rich than this profusion of brilliant colouring thus bestowed, and the subjects of which the pictures are composed they found not uninteresting. Among them were all the most celebrated libraries of past times, and over the door by which they entered was a painting representing Sixtus V. receiving the plan of the present library from Fontana.

"This is really the most beautiful, the gayest looking room I ever entered," exclaimed Mercedes; "it would be quite impossible to study here. All these bright colours, and graceful, fantastic ornaments would distract the attention of the most serious book-worm. Nor is it at all satisfactory to see no books. The sight of them disposes the mind to study; nothing inspires the desire so strongly as to find yourself surrounded by venerable folios that look so profoundly wise, and as if quite confident that they could, if properly appealed to, and treated with due reverence, reveal many deep secrets well.

worth obtaining at any cost of time and trouble. I always long to begin forthwith, to seat myself on the ground before them, and by gentle means induce them to leave their ancient station; and to permit me to dislodge their long established dust, that in itself demands respect. Then, in spite of their groans and the many mysterious noises uttered around, which might well be supposed to indicate displeasure at the disturbance occasioned by an audacious hand, I would persuade them to allow me to acquaint myself, in some slight measure at least, with

The close pressed leaves unclosed for many an age, The dull red edging of the well-filled page, On the broad back the stubborn ridges rolled Where yet the title stands in tarnished gold.

Do you not feel," she continued, addressing Julian who was near her, "when in a library, that nothing would so certainly ensure the happiness and Peace of your existence as to become really devoted to such pursuits? I have this conviction so strongly that I always entertain a vague hope that I may be left behind while reading the titles of my future friends, locked up and forgotten. But not here," she added, laughingly, "I don't wish to be forgotten here."

"Some one has said, and very wisely you will think, Miss Ratcliffe, if such be your feelings," replied Julian, "were I to pray for a taste which should stand me instead under every variety of circumstance, and be a source of happiness and

of cheerfulness to me through life, and a shield against all its ills, however things might go amiss, it should be a taste for reading."\*

"And do you agree in this declaration?" asked Mercedes. "You would not exchange your own taste, and accept this in preference?"

"Perhaps not," replied Julian, with a smile; "but still I doubt not which of the two would confer the greatest peace: that which is least ambitious; for believe me, ambition is one of those feelings 'qui troublent singulièrement la vie.'"

"But you," returned Mercedes, with a look of thoughtfulness, "never would be unambitious apply your mind as you would; you would not bable to read unambitiously. Genius has a besoide créer which renders it restless."

So many thoughts occurred to each of them one the subjection which they had fallen, that they felt it useless to attempt to pursue it, and were content to turn their attention to things around them. As they walked through the rooms, they paused remark the plan of Michel Angelo, for the façade of St. Peter's, which is preserved in one of the paintings on the wall, and to regret that it had not be preferred to the one adopted; and observed with curiosity the representation of Fontana's machine for the erection of the obelisk that stands in the Piazzana.

Julian failed not to lead their attention to to ceiling which is painted by Guido representing to deeds of Samson; and as they gazed up at it, in the

<sup>\*</sup> Macintosh.

painful admiration which a finely painted ceiling always exacts, Lord Sylvester said to them:

"How much the painter's representation and the poet's description of this redoubtable hero agree. Do you not immediately think of Milton's lines portraying

The heroic, the renowned Inesistible Samson? whom unarmed No strength of man or fiercest wild beast could withstand; Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid; Ran on embattled armies clad in iron; And, weaponless himself, Made arms ridiculous—

## And here he is when he

By main force pulled up, and on his shoulders bore The gates of Azza, post, and massy bar,
Up to the hill by Hebron, seat of giants old,
No journey of a sabbath-day, and loaded so,
Like whom the Gentiles fain to bear up Heaven.

One might suppose that the poet or the painter designed in their different languages to speak the thoughts of the other."

Of course our party did not quit these apartments without surveying the celebrated Nozze Aldobrandini which are now preserved there.

Poetry has been defined,—and is not the definition satisfactory as 'the language of the imagination and the passions?' These can speak, oh, how audibly! through the medium of painting and music, as well as verse. In fact, words, pictures, and music are the three instruments of giving expression to Poetry. A poet may choose which of the three he will prefer, and whoever successfully employs either, is a poet. Will you agree with me in this?"

"Yes," replied Julian, and Mercedes went on:

"There will be much difference of opinion as to which of these instruments is most powerful, and best adapted to give utterance to the conceptions of the poet. Here physical causes will probably decide individuals in their choice: such as the gift of a fine ear for music, a fine eye for colour: those who are thus naturally qualified to attain excellence by the one means, may be quite unable to reach it by the others; and though a painter, a musician, a writer of verses may be equally great poets, they may be unable to rival each other in their different branches."

"Do not, for the glory of Italy," said Julian,
"pass over in silence the fact that some of her
children have been gifted with the requisites for
excellence in all. Do not forget the incomparable
talents of Leonardo da Vinci, throwing into the
shade all the half authenticated tales of the Admirable Crichton; nor the offspring of the pens of
Michel Angelo, and of Salvator Rosa, as worthy to
the as those of their chisel and their brush. I

would also entreat you to observe, for the credit of my art, that those men who presented such a rare combination of talents, and thus successfully invaded a rival territory, were all par excellence painters."

"True," answered Mercedes; "but I am about to give utterance to an opinion which I fear you will not pardon me for entertaining; and yet the very argument by which I see you intend to prove a contrary one, seems to me to give confirmation to mine. With regard to the merits of these instruments, surely one, that of words, possesses powers incontestably greatest, and he who alive to this truth, ventures to grasp them in the belief that he will not be crushed by them, but will be able to subject them to his purpose, proves that he has a more comprehensive intellect, a vaster, and more vigorous genius than those who are content with the qualities possessed by the others.

"It seems to me, that to him the universe offers all its treasures; to the others it imparts some precious gifts, but does not lay open all its stores, knowing that they could not bear them away. For is not this remark perfectly true? 'That there is now thought nor feeling that can enter into the mind of man, that he can be eager to communicate to others, and that they would listen to with delight that is not a fit subject for poetry?' Yet you cannot hesitate to allow that the poet-painter, and the poet-musician must have many thoughts and feel ings which he knows it to be impossible to develop.

by means of his art. And does not your remark contain a confession that painters of a peculiarly devated mind have been forced to have recourse to words, while those who had already chosen them as the vehicles of their thoughts, felt no need to seek the aid of pictures to give them an adequate expression?

"These ideas are strengthened in me by the circumstance, that one day, after reading a favourite Pessage in Dante, I turned over Flaxman's most quisite illustrations of the Divina Commedia, and found that he had made no attempt to embody it. I should like very much to read to you the lines mean; not to make a convert of you to my inion, but to give you the pleasure of feeling beauty. It is not one of the best known passes, nor is it very long. Will you give me the book; I see it lying on your table. It is one of your chosen companions."

Julian willingly complied with her request, and she quickly found the lines of which she had spoken. As she read, the accents of her voice, which was one of peculiar sweetness and feeling, brought home all the poet's meaning to his hear.\*

\* Maestro, dissi lui, or mi di' anche:
Questa fortuna di che tu mi tocche,
Che è, che i ben del mondo ha sì tra branche?
E quegli a me: O creature sciocche,
Quanta ignoranza è quella che v' offende!
Or vo' che tu mia sentenza ne' mbocche.
[Colui

"I have always," said Mercedes, lookin from the book which she still held open in hand, "thought this personification of Fc so touchingly beautiful, and so impossible expressed but by these words of the poet! different is this Christian poet's conception o to that of the heathen: how sublime and consolatory is it, while theirs would only birth to the apathy of the fatalist and the Dante has painted a creature armed with gree irresistible power, but yet inspiring trust and

Colui lo saver tutto trascende, Fece li cieli, e diè lor chi conduce, Sì ch'ogni parte ad ogni parte splende, Distribuendo egualmente la luce: Similmente agli splendor mondani Ordinò general ministra e duce, Che permutasse a tempo li ben vani, Di gente in gente, e d' uno in altro sangue. Oltre la difension de' senni umani: Perch'una gente impera e l'altra langue, Seguendo lo giudicio di costei, Ched è occulto com' in erba langue. Vostro saver non ha contrasto a lei: Ella provvede, giudica, e persegue Suo regno, come il loro gli altri Dei. Le sue permutazion non hanno triegue: Necessità la fa esser veloce; Sì spesso bien chi vicenda consegue-Quest' è colei ch' è tanto posta in croce Pur da color che le dovrian dar lode. Dandole biasmo a torto e mala voce. Ma ella s' è beata, e ciò non ode: Con l'altre prime creature lieta Volve sua spera, e beata si gode."

L'INFERI

fidence rather than terror, through our knowledge that she is actuated by

A pure submission to the ruling mind.

She is represented as deaf to our cries and our deprecations, as we well know her to be; for how many would reverse her decrees were it possible to wrest her authority from her hand. But even this circumstance gives us a very different impression of her to that made by the recklessness of the blind goddess of heathen mythology. The one appears inflexible in the performance of the behests of the Most High; the other insensible of, and indifferent to human sufferings, of which she makes an ardle game. And when the poet goes on to describe the imperturbable joy with which she fulfils her task, he gives her, I think, one of the most signal characteristics of a heavenly creature. How difficult it is to our inferior natures to persist with unruffled serenity in the execution of what we know to be our duty, if beset by those who reprove, who upbraid, who threaten, who implore. This description of her untroubled peace in doing the will of Him who appoints her task, seems to me to give us a glimpse of Heaven, and to reveal to us, as it were, something of the nature of its promised joys."

While Mercedes spoke, her countenance wore an expression of the fervent hope of the looking on of the believer to the bliss to come. Julian regarded it in silent emotion, which rendered him unable for awhile to reply.

When he spoke, he said:

"Of what you say, I feel and acknowle truth; but let me speak to you of a delig enjoyed by poet, painter, and musician; latter, perhaps, in the highest degree for but only for a time; for him it is not endur can any thing deteriorate a pleasure so muc sense of its evanescence? I allude to the of awakening sympathy with feelings you express. Do not ordinary men deem the happy if they can inspire their own sentin the bosoms of a few of those who encircle If the intimate feelings of their hear with a response in the eyes that read then thoughts of their minds are comprehende few of those who witness their developmen it not universally declared to be the greates dient of happiness to find 'thought, feelin harmonious to our own?' Is not this source of bliss more open, and deep wider for the poet and the painter than other human beings, even than for any c the children of genius? Will not their ir able works prove a link to unite them, not the few who love and know them in life, t their visible presence is dear-but bind the solubly to every heart and soul that share t pirations after perfection, that can understa pure and noble conceptions, that melt w same tenderness, glow with the same : Did not Raphael feel, when he embodied all mild and pure, gracious and excellent, spirit

out, in his representation of the Virgin Mother;—
he not know that he was then speaking in an
ble voice to all among those who in every
flock to render homage to his matchless works,
had hearts to feel, and minds to conceive
purity and beauty of the character of her who
Blessed among women? Was he not assured
he could not fail to engage the sympathy,
waken the gratitude, to win the love of all
t, whenever this, the work of his hand, the
tion of his mind, should meet their eyes?"

Do you think," asked Mercedes, who heard
with interest, "that those who are endowed
these great gifts of genius, are of all men

'Alas, no!" replied Julian; "that delicacy of ing and liveliness of imagination which they essarily possess destroy their peace.

More wounds than nature gives they know.

happiest?"

relieve in the assertion that 'le poète a une ulédiction sur sa vie, et une bénédiction sur nom.' And yet who would not desire their ration?'

"Who, indeed!" repeated Mercedes; and wughtfulness overspread both their countenances.

#### CHAPTER XXIII.

You lay out too much pains for purchasing but trouble.

CYMBELIES

THE fame of Wilmot's picture, as it approached completion, spread through all circles, and the general curiosity to see it was heightened by the interest with which Miss Ratcliffe's beauty invested it. Every one flocked to the young painter's studio; Lady Sylvester and even Wentworth were gratified by the celebrity their young companion thus acquired, and Mrs. Annesly Marchmont's supremacy in respect to beauty was no longer undisputed.

Neither Julian nor Mercedes derived unmixed pleasure from this triumphant success. The notoriety that followed it was distressing to the retiring modesty of the latter, though she consolinerself by the reflection that the penalty she the paid was advantageous to the young artist; Julian, while it afforded him some pleasure the first work of his that had challenged univerself attention, should be the portrait of her held still shrank from beholding her beauty scruti by other eyes.

Soon after his picture became the commor of conversation, Julian, at an assembly in ingregated all those who throughout the had met together on such occasions, imself in the vicinity of Mrs. Annesly ont, whom he was led particularly to by perceiving that, after looking around air of haughty unconcern she fixed her h a stare of scrutiny on Miss Ratcliffe. dfast gaze seemed meant to declare that in vain attempting to discover the cause imiration that was so generally avowed for d the look of contemptuous indifference ne at the same time wore, Julian easily to be assumed in order to conceal the mortification which this prolonged survey outhful rival's unfaded charms could scarcely rcite.

s great surprise, he saw the haughty beauty turn from Mercedes to himself, and then few words to Wentworth, who was in n of his usual station at her side. He l, but with an evident look of displeasure, roaching him took his arm, saying with otness that showed how little he considered

ne with me, Wilmot, for Mrs. Annesly ont has sent for you. The fame of your reached her ears and she desires to have ented to her."

, equally displeased with Arundel's manner, se to the lady, would willingly have refused ice; but knowing such a proceeding to be

too glaring a dereliction of politeness to b cable, he allowed Wentworth to conduct hir After the introduction had taken place, he silence beside her, until she should choose the further honour upon him of addressi. The haughty lady merely interpreted the taciturnity as the natural effect of timid c inspired by the notice she had already bess him; and now with one of her blandest smi as was rarely lavished on any who desir being reserved rather to rivet chains that the point of breaking, or to gild them i who seemed unwilling to endure their we began to speak in a voice 'musical as is lyre.'

"Mr. Wilmot, may I have permission your studio? I am most impatient works so universally admired; but I feel authorized to intrude on hours so well merely for the gratification of an ignorant Had I the power of offering those valuable which you must often gather from such a c as Lord Sylvester, I might flatter myself visits would be desired; but I fear that only vexation from the crowd of idlers w around you, prodigal of admiration, w been taught them by the initiated, rat inspired by what they see with their o Half the spontaneous praises which they rendered as much to the pretty face w happened to form your subject, as to

t which you have displayed in the execution

ian smiled, and venturing to interrupt the ramoment, replied:

- 1 this they show excellent judgment. I cerdo not yet presume to suppose that I equal auties of nature."
- 3. Annesly Marchmont did not appear to to this remark, but continued with increasveetness:

Il your countrymen owe you much gratitude, Vilmot, for it is very delightful to see an hman bear away the laurels which these vain a would arrogate the sole right to wear. nust surely feel great pleasure in thus giving ight to be proud of you."

this ingenious compliment Julian could only by a bow. The further favours which Mrs. ly Marchmont intended to confer upon him quite beyond his anticipation; and she was ed to find him, when made acquainted with unable to express his gratitude in any adeterms. With an appearance of humility such empressement, she again entreated him I her when she might come to see his ngs.

lot only this portrait," she said in a tone that neant to incite the painter to think that his works were unjustly cast into the shade e notice which it attracted to itself, "but which you have been employed during

the winter. I have heard of many other productions that more than equally demand admiration (Unfortunately she did not know any one of whice she could speak.) "Portrait painting," she continued, retreating from that part of the subject which she knew not how to enter on successfully, "commands such extensive patronage in England, that of course the attainment of extraordinary excellence in it would meet with such readiness of encouragement that would dispose you to pursue it."

Julian replied, as she paused for a moment:

"Pardon me, I do not think that I shall ever practise it again; except it were to preserve for myself a memorial of a friend, or to gratify the wishes of one. I shall never pursue a branch of my art which is so little qualified to accomplish the wishes I entertain."

"Indeed!" returned Mrs. Annesly Marchmont, with a smile, not at all allowing this declaration to interfere with her design. "Your ambition there soars high; so it ought—especially in undisappointed youth. But once more must your skill be employed on a very unworthy subject. You will not refuse me the request I am about to make You will consent to paint my portrait before you abandon the occupation for ever?"

And as she asked this question, her countenance told how much she expected the painter to be elated; how little she feared that she could be refused. But Julian, though taken by surprise, and now first enlightened as to the purpose of all the

fair speeches, was not long at a loss how to

refuse a request," he said respectfully, "is painful; but the pain may be greatly lessy the knowledge that the refusal inflicts no but indeed quite the contrary. A young nost obscure artist, such as I am, cannot feel atly grateful for the unsolicited offer of ge from one whose notice confers fame, as circle of society here Mrs. Annesly Marchcould not fail to do; but my sense of the at I as little deserve such distinction as I entured to seek it, makes me aware that the e of conduct which it becomes me to follow, nce most respectfully to decline it. Miss e's father has long been the friend of my and my most munificent benefactor. token of gratitude I offer him this picture, n aware that imperfections in it will be y regarded by him, when he considers it as k of my hand. I have not the same claims indulgence of others; and my only desire nvince Mrs. Annesly Marchmont as fully as yself convinced, that if she would possess a at all worthy of herself, there are many studios in Rome in which she can be far gratified."

. Annesly Marchmont listened to the comment of this speech with polite attention. pected the young painter to be overpowered first contemplation of the task proposed to him, and modestly to disclaim his power to perform it. But the length of Julian's answer rendered her rather impatient, and the quiet firmness of his manner seemed so unlike the effect of timid irresolution that she began to listen with doubt, though still with incredulity. When she replied, it was with scarcely an attempt to conceal her haughty displeasure.

"I might admire the humility of your speech Mr. Wilmot, but that it leads me to infer that you doubt my capacity to select for myself the person best calculated to execute my wishes. Now, do you know," she continued, again relaxing into somile, "that it seems to me very conceited of you to think your generally acknowledged fame undeserved?"

"Believe me," returned Julian, "it is as you yourself judiciously pointed out. In this instance half the praise that I have won was in realit owing to the remarkable beauty of my subject."

Mrs. Annesly Marchmont at this reply bit he lips, and looked more angry than before; sh answered drily:—

"I do not remember to have made the judicious remark that you attribute to me. It sounds to me more like one of Lord Sylvester's critiques."

She paused, and Julian was in hopes that she would now permit him to retreat; to both it we perceptible that their lengthened conversation has excited observation and curiosity, and Mrs. Anneal Marchmont, feeling not quite sure whether the

painter was in earnest, or merely displaying a mock humility; but certainly not pleased with the manner in which he had received her flattering intelligence, and anxious above all things that, if she failed, her attempt should remain unknown, resolved no longer to prolong the discourse, and saying:

"To-morrow you may expect a visit from me, and we will then settle all preliminaries," dismissed him with a bow. Before he could proffer any reply, she was engaged a-fresh in conversation, and Julian moved unreluctantly away; though conscious of the meaning of her last words, he had no dread of being beguiled of his resolution by any of the lady's artifices. He felt that no inducement could tempt him to employ his pencil in the service of Mercedes' rival, to whom he had an aversion so lively, that he knew that he had been but honest in declaring that he could never execute a portrait of her, which it would give her any pleasure to possess.

"What!" said Lord Sylvester as he passed him in the crowd, "are you too gone over to the enemy? Et tu, Brute?"

Julian started, for he had not observed his friend.

"Indeed," he replied, seeing him desirous to pause, and listen to an explanation of the circumstance which had excited his curiosity, "an unwilling obedience to a peremptory summons can hardly be construed into an act of treason."

"Have you really been thus highly favoured? Wentworth, I suppose, is so charmed with your vol. I. last attempt that he deems you worthy of highest patronage, for he it was who conduc you to the feet of the supreme arbitress of fashio

"I was not only thus highly favoured, but me more highly favoured. Some, you know, he honour thrust upon them; in this case neit deserved, nor desired. What should you this of so proud a beauty requesting me to paint! portrait?"

"What! that she might in all things rival r mother's fair protégée! When are you to con mence this formidable undertaking?"

" Never."

"Do you mean that you refused acquiescence demanded Lord Sylvester in a tone of pleasure.

"Yes," answered Julian drily.

"You have, upon my word, been very rash a very daring."

"Why so? I am not a portrait painter; Remond is. I have told you already my reasons willingly undertaking Miss Ratcliffe's picture, I in this instance, I am uninfluenced by any simi motives."

"You must be aware that you are throw away great means of coming forward into not You are, in fact, acting with your usual imp dence," said Lord Sylvester, ironically.

"Be it so," replied Julian with a smile, "as usual I must withstand your friendly admetions."

Julian saw plainly that Lord Sylvester felt

satisfaction at his conduct which he was scarcely at the pains to conceal. He had a secret conviction that to Mercedes it would not be less pleasing, and be now looked around to see where she was, and how occupied. He had observed of late that her vivacity was frequently interrupted by seasons of thoughtful silence, which seemed to him occasioned by some secret uneasiness. These passing clouds cast a shade over her youthful joyousness. The chill they imparted to the warmth of her sunny smiles was perhaps scarcely felt by those who enjoyed only a trifling pleasure when basking in their beams; but to Julian this gloom was perceptible, however transitory: eager to ascertain its cause, he watched her narrowly, and as tenderly as a mother could watch a drooping child; and earnestly did he wish that his mother could be by her, to win from her the cause of her despondency, and remove her care by timely counsels. To-night she appeared to be more depressed than he had ever seen her before, and he could not be satisfied without making an attempt to speak to her. Having at last succeeded in gaining her side, he said in a low voice:

"You are not well this evening, Miss Ratcliffe, I fear."

"Why do you say so?" she replied starting.

"You have pressed your hand to your forehead so many times. Besides you must remember that I am now so well acquainted with your countenance that I can see every change in it."

"Indeed! I shall always turn away from yeif that be the case," answered Mercedes with smile.

Almost fearful of giving offence, Julian hesitate but could not refrain from adding in an earnest voice

"There are then changes, Miss Ratcliffe, whi even you would disguise? Pardon me," he se hastily, seeing that his rash inquiry caus Mercedes to change colour, and that she paus as if unable to reply; but she immediately regain her composure and answered, not without a tin of melancholy:

"People expect much more vivacity from n than I possess. If I am serious, they always see to think me sad."

"You used to be rarely serious; at least, o such occasions as these," said Julian. "None wer so gay."

"Yes," replied Mercedes; "I am gay and ye sometimes sad too. 'Il est bien difficile de n'etr pas sérieux au fond, si ce fond n'est pas, comm dans quelques gens, à la superficie.' Perhaps, she added laughing, "many do me the injustic to suppose that such is the case with me, an that, therefore, I never ought to be serious."

Then changing the subject suddenly and tryin to speak with an air of carelessness, Mercedes said

"I see that you also are acquainted with Mi Annesly Marchmont. I saw you talk to her f some time. Tell me, is her conversation so brilliar her manner so fascinating as they are said to be Why did Mercedes make this inquiry so earnestly in spite of herself? Did she alike discern and dread the influence of her rival's charms on Arundel's heart? As this suspicion passed through Julian's breast, it caused him a bitter pang; but he was willing on any terms to convey pleasure to Mercedes, and he answered promptly:

"I do not discover in what her attractions lie, for there is an affectation in all she does; an appearance of dissimulation in all she says; and in the sweetest of her smiles, there lurks a haughtiness, that disfigures even her beautiful face. I never was addressed by her before this evening, and she sent for me to ask to see your picture tomorrow."

"And did you consent?" inquired Mercedes, almost as if she hoped that he had refused.

"I could not decline her proposed visit to my studio," replied Julian; "but I did refuse her next request, which was to paint her portrait."

Mercedes did not speak, but her face beamed with satisfaction; then, as if with self-reproach, she exclaimed:

"Oh! Mr. Wilmot, why did you do so?" (though Mercedes asked this question, she felt why Julian had refused; he regarded with indignation the woman who sought to injure her). "You will make her your enemy!"

She spoke as if she dreaded her enmity.

"Scarcely, I should think," replied Julian, " and if she be, how can she injure me?"

"I should not like to know that she was said Mercedes thoughtfully.

"If she take offence, I cannot help it; not act differently," and then Wilmot re all that he had said to Mrs. Annesly March but Mercedes shook her head, and looke alarmed.

"I would not, if I were you, make pub request, nor your refusal. Do not add to it i provocation."

"Indeed this caution, for which I thank was needless. I am not vain enough, Mis cliffe, to wish to boast of her proffered patror

Julian left Mercedes to find Lord Sylveste to ask him not to repeat the communication he had made to him. Lord Sylvester lau and congratulated him on this acquisition o dence.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

Harm not yourself with your vexation. I Am senseless of your wrath; a touch more rare Subdues—all fears.

CYMBELINE.

THE following morning Mrs. Annesly Marchmont drove to Wilmot's studio, impatient to ascertain if he could really dare to provoke her Wrath by persisting in his refusal, or whether his refusal had never been seriously given; but this she could not bring herself to think, though she wished to do so. However, discarding her secret misgivings, she entered the room armed With an air of undoubting assurance of success, and prepared to lavish as many more praises on the artist as she thought would ensure his acquiescence in her wishes. Mrs. Annesly Marchmont, could she have felt more secure on the score of Julian's final obedience to her commands, would, (knowing that such a proceeding could not but be Peculiarly galling to Lady Sylvester and wounding to Miss Ratcliffe,) have insisted on Wentworth's attendance on this occasion. But as it was, she Preferred going alone, and therefore forbid his Presence, taking care to do so in a manner that made the relinquishment of it appear to him an act of merit, and rendered him more than ever

disposed to condemn his mother's unjustifiable animadversions on the conduct of Mrs. Annessly Marchmont in general, and towards himself in particular.

Julian, with unofficious politeness, displayed to his visitor those paintings which he usually exhibited to strangers with whose pretensions to taste and judgment he was unacquainted. The portrait of Mercedes he would have kept veiled from her envious gaze, if he could; but of course this was impossible. It was the object of her visit, and it was only her unwillingness to mortify the artist, that induced her to give any consideration to the other productions of his pencil. After a close scrutiny of Miss Ratcliffe's picture and the most lavish commendations of its excellence, she recurred to the request which she had made the preceding evening.

"I am more than ever bent on obtaining my wish; nor can you venture, Mr. Wilmot, with such a witness as that against you, to repeat the very pretty and proper professions of inability to which you forced me to listen last night," she said, pointing with a smile to Mercedes' portrait.

Julian bowed to her compliment, but respectfully repeated in language which admitted of no further misconstruction of his meaning, that he was still compelled to decline the honour proposed to him.

"Unfortunately," he said, "he had not even the time at his command that was necessary to authorise any hopes of success, for he was contemplating a journey to Naples as soon as Lent should begin. He still declared his conviction that his refusal would not deprive Mrs. Annesly Marchmont of any thing at all worthy to be in her possession, and he hoped that she would consent to believe in this consolatory truth."

The lady reddened with displeasure, and then turned pale with increasing anger. She felt that she had already compromised her dignity by her eager pursuit of that which was denied her. Command, not supplication, became her lips; but she knew it would be equally unavailing. She rose to depart, and approached the picture to look at it more nearly. Suddenly turning towards the painter, and fixing her brilliant eyes upon him with a look full of threatening, and with a malicious smile she said in a mocking voice, leaving him by her whole demeanour uncertain how far she was in earnest:

"Some would deem this an act of folly and of insolence which ought not to go unpunished. Have you no fear that favour rejected should be ill-will earned? Should not you dread to make me your enemy?"

She stopped as abruptly as she had commenced; she wished to startle, to subdue, to awaken a vague fear in the young painter. Julian heard her with amazement indeed, but with quiet self-possession he replied:

"I will not anticipate so much injustice from

Mrs. Annesly Marchmont as lasting indiquould be; nor flatter myself that I am of su importance to awaken even a momentary fee the kind."

"I have hated what I have also despised now," replied Mrs. Annesly Marchmont, he tiful face suddenly disfigured by an exp of concentrated bitterness and anger tha Julian with disgust, "and a day may come may remember your refusal."

She swept past him as she spoke, and ther carriage before he recovered sufficient s session to remember that he ought to have fered his services in conducting her to it.

To Mercedes, Julian did not repeat this edinary conversation. He felt that it woulher to hear that any woman had behaved in manner, even though the woman who din herself by this violence, was her rival. To Sylvester he related her strange words a promise of secrecy. Lord Sylvester replies a short silence, with a dryness of manner problem to him when his conviction was complete:

"Depend upon it that she will some day you: but it is too late to conciliate now."

To this last remark, Julian cordially When next he saw Mrs. Annesly Marchn was informed that she was about to leave the following day, and she was in consummer surrounded by those whom her departure to despair Wentworth was present, but

more guarded in the expression of his devotion than usual.

Julian, much to his surprise, discovered that in the interval which had elapsed since he had seen them together, Mrs. Annesly Marchmont had made the acquaintance of Mercedes, for when she departed she came to the spot where Miss Ratcliffe stood, and he himself beside her; and taking her hand, without regarding the reluctance with which it was yielded, said, with a smile that forcibly reminded Julian of the last he had seen on her lips:

"Farewell, Miss Ratcliffe; I trust we shall meet again in our travels homeward."

As she moved on, her dress actually touched him, yet she did not recognize him by word or look.

Mercedes, when she was passed, drawing her breath as if inexpressibly relieved, murmured in a low voice, which, however, reached Julian's ear:

"She will be gone to-morrow!"

Julian heard these words with regret, for in her departure he saw the removal of the strongest barrier that existed between Mercedes and Wentworth.

#### CHAPTER XXV.

To feel for trifles a distracting train Of hopes and terrors equally in vain.

AKENSID

I, under fair pretence of friendly ends, And well-placed words of glozing courtesy, Baited with reasons not unplausible, Wind me into the easy-hearted man, And hug him into snares.

COMUS.

IT was impossible that Julian should contin meet Miss Ratcliffe in general society w perpetually enduring the pangs of jealous awakened by beholding her surrounded by entitled to be openly her suitors. ceived that her beauty, her unaffected vivacity noble simplicity of character touched those that were capable of feeling disinterested par while the reputation of her wealth attracted idle fortune hunter, whom the possession ( empty title, or of noble blood, or merely of an gance not to be daunted, led to flatter them that they also had a right to dispute the While Mrs. Annesly Marchmont was in I Julian frequently heard of and witnessed Aru devotion to her; and this he flattered himse incompatible with any definite engagement with Lat cliffe. Still he had from the first seen enough to convince him of the desire entertained by Lady Sylvester to effect one, which in one respect made her act (unknowingly of course) as his friend rather than as his enemy. It led her sedulously to watch the advances of that crowd of admirers who caused uneasiness to both alike, and as far as she ventured, to discourage them.

Among those who had lately awakened Julian's suspicions, was a young Irish Baronet, Sir Alfred Rayleigh, who had lately arrived at Rome.

Prepossessing in person and manner, generous and warm-hearted in no common measure, his countenance bespoke the amiability of his disposition, but was little expressive of any brilliant gifts of intellect. Not that he was either a dull or uninteresting companion; he was not destitute of the ready wit, or the frank vivacity of his country; but his ignorance and total want of cultivation of mind were glaringly evident, and the weakness of his character easily discernible. Left without parents at a early age, he had experienced the most careless begigence on the part of one of two guardians. He who had been selected merely as a man of business, conscientiously fulfilled his trust, and restored the property committed to his superintendence, which had been greatly impoverished by the extravagance of its last possessor, to a more flourishing state than it had ever known: while the other, though a personal friend of the father of his young ward, left him to follow his own inclinations, not even counselling

him to go through the general routine of an education suitable to his prospects in life, to which his extreme indolence of mind and vacillating character rendered him averse. His opinions were unformed, and he had a want of confidence in himself which disposed him to lean upon other. Unfortunately, he scarcely possessed sufficient discernment to seek out those, who might have less a worthy support to his weakness, and there we no want of flatterers ready to undertake the office.

All these faults, and they were his worst, might however, have been easily pardoned and greath rectified by the woman to whom he should given his heart; and the generosity of feeling which we sure to characterise his affection whenever be stowed, might invest him with an interest calculated to win the tenderness which he asked in return.

Julian awaited not without dread the effect of the impending discovery of his timid passion of Mercedes. He compared him with Wentwork and acknowledged that in every brilliant attraction Sir Alfred must yield the palm; yet he felt the he should greatly prefer him as a friend, and we it impossible that Mercedes should accord him to preference as a lover? Starting in dismay at the suggestion, he sought to find consolation in opposit reflections, saying to himself:

"Is it possible that she, with that cultivat taste, that refinement of mind, that ardent love knowledge, which make her delight in the social of such a man as Lord Sylvester, and qualify her to share his pursuits—is it possible that she will become for life the inseparable companion of one to tasteless, so uninformed?—Not only 'with intellect so unreplenished,' but without the capacity to fill the store-houses of the brain, if any such there be in that head of his?"

As all his anxiety could not hasten the course of events, he was forced to watch their progress with an appearance of unconcern, though agerly awaiting the crisis which he saw apmeching. He was unable to refrain from seizevery opportunity that afforded itself of seeing society the objects of his interest. Mercedes, in the last of her visits to the painter's studio, told him that as the moon was at the full, they intended to repair to the Coliseum, and thus to to homage to all its variety of beautiful aspects; having often beheld it burnished by the gorgeous mys of the setting sun, and many times in their noming excursions, seen it illumined by that orb when rising; and had viewed it also in its noontide glory, when the deep blue sky looked more 'darkly, deeply, beautifully blue' through its many openings, and the glowing redness of the walls contrasted most forcibly with the verdant freshness of the thousand plants that overrun it. Mercedes as she told him of their intention, went on to repeat with admiration, words which, she said, were to her more truly descriptive of that majestic building than any others she had ever read or heard;

comprising, as they did, all its peculiarities sentence.

"As it now stands, the Coliseum is a s image of Rome itself—decayed, vacant, s yet grand;—half grey and half green;—er one side, and fallen on the other;—with cons ground in its bosom; inhabited by a beavisited by every caste;—for moralists, antique painters, architects, poets, devotees, all me to meditate, to examine, to draw, to measu to pray."

Julian assented to her approval of this se only he pointed out what he thought two defect

"Why," he asked, "does Forsyth say, 'serious, yet grand?' Where is the opp indicated by 'yet?' And why does he can Coliseum half grey? A painter may can himself qualified to criticise the truth of descepithets. I think that in those scenes Byron has described, he is the only common them, whom I would willingly allow to a pany me. The exquisite propriety of every he applies, is then remarked with an admit that adds to the pleasure of the hour. I we quote his magnificent passages on the Col because half your party will have them by and will be bent on finding listeners.

Julian, who had long since ceased to whether he should fly from or seek the prof Mercedes, readily acquiesced in her profit that he should accompany them, and the approximation of the should accompany them.

evening found him among the earliest of the expected guests at the Palazzo —. Sir Alfred had. however, preceded him, and Wentworth had preorded them both, and embittered to both the prospects of the evening by the bright smiles thich he won from Mercedes. Julian plainly pereived how rapid was his progress towards the tainment of his object, now that he was freed om the baneful influence of Mrs. Annesly Marchont's charms; and he saw him animated to ausual exertions, and rendered by the presence of rival, (welcome rather than unwelcome to him). l vivacity, all amiability, and all devotion. When re party assembled in the interior of the Coliseum, ilian was full of anxiety to see whose arm would ifirst proffered to Mercedes, and whose by her repted. Oh, that he might be her conductor! at he might be the sole listener to her expression thoughts and feelings, which such a scene would I forth!—That he might, in turn, speak to her, heard by any other human ear, the swelling notions of his bosom, and tell her how his painter's ul was affected whilst wandering thus in paths at have inspired poets!—In melancholy silence stood apart, eager to observe for whom that poiness was reserved, which was for him unatnable. He dreaded lest it should be Arundel: could not wish that it should be Sir Alfred. he saw that a declaration of love was trembling his lips; he would have been positively happy t had been Lord Sylvester, for then he might e joined them, and in the interchange of congenial sentiments, have enjoyed a temporary respit from his misery.

But Wentworth was resolved to meet with no defeat, and with the rapidity of thought, b obtained possession of Mercedes' arm, with demonstration of anxiety intended to convinc her how much he valued the privilege of being a her side. Julian observed, on looking round to se how his disconsolate rival would bear this dis appointment, that Lady Sylvester, manifesting scarcely less decision in her choice, approached th young baronet, and took his arm. Seeing that Lor Sylvester was also engaged, Julian gladly wandere on alone, inexpressibly relieved to find it in hi power to do so, and in a few minutes lost sight a all companions. The sublimity of the scene w so great as to force him in some measure to let himself in the meditations it so naturally awak ened; but this was not the first time that Julia had visited it at the same hour. and under de cumstances far more favourable to the indulgent of reveries than the present. It was frequently hi habit, on quitting a heated ball-room, or what weary of the solitude of his own chamber, to drive to this spot, and obtaining admission by a fee t the Custode, to wander for hours alone over it ruins, not unfrequently endangered by an unse approach to the verge of its yawning chasms, as impressed to a painful degree, with the sense of i magnitude, its gloom, and its utter destitution former glory.

Most forcibly did Julian feel how truly the

ruin may be considered as the type of erself. His imagination, recalling the past, ee in that vast and magnificent theatre, were enacted scenes of sanguinary cruelty, est carnage, a fit image of the palmy days me sent forth proud conquerors, who rewith laurels dropping with the blood of red people, and dyed them deeper still in er citizens. Then would he picture Christyrs expiring on that dread arena, but in that seemed to speak despair to the hearts their abhorred race, sowing the good seed tile soil, and watering it with their blood, reathers sat around despising and exulting. compared to the time when Rome, yet un-1 by prosperity, and yet awaiting the reher enemies mightier than herself, was in abourer in the vineyard of her Lord. And e cast a glance on the marks of paltry ions and vain delusions, that now provoke mation or the derision of the moralist who y them, he saw Rome, as she is, fallen

Il were not equally employed in moralising. ere many no less engrossed on that evening own petty pursuits and interests, vanities tations, than if they had been in a scene fall interest, and of all power of awakening ht that was not of the present. There ers, who would have despised these triflers, bstracted from the outward scene, by the

eager pursuit of their own designs and machi tions. Among these was Lady Sylvester. She I not proceeded far with her young compan when she began to address him in those silv tones of sweetness so peculiarly her own.

"You are not aware, Sir Alfred," she said, "I was formerly one of your mother's most fam friends. How much was I reminded of her w first I saw you! How all my friend came I before me! A painful pleasure!—You do know yet, but you will know, for yours is a ing heart, how tender are the friendships of yo how potent the spell they fling over our k years! It is the love of her memory that m me speak to you now in so sad a strain. A tion for her, and," she paused and then utt in a voice at once so gentle, and so earnest, "pity for you."

Her companion started, and by a slight impulher arm, she induced him to stop.

"Nay, do not start, either in surprise, of dismay. If such my interest in you, is it strathat I should have read emotions which you are ingenuous to know how to conceal? Does it a you to find them in my possession?" Sca pausing for a reply, she continued: "Miss cliffe's beauty has charmed you; your heart y to the irresistible fascination of her society. I now about to do for you what I would do for other: to save you from your danger, by maknown to you a secret, which, for reasons of

portance, I assure you I have hitherto, continue to keep inviolate—this is, my gement to Miss Ratcliffe."

tim started back from her as she said ds, and leaning against a broken wall s face with his hands and muttered:

ven so? I anticipated this."

ylvester approached him, and as if disthe sight of his emotion laid her hand his arm, and added:

nsel you, dear Sir Alfred, to fly—now e is time, and seek in other scenes the of your peace of mind."

—I will;" said Sir Alfred, "I will go to stantly."

moment a deep sigh reached their ears; started, and Lady Sylvester looked around ilty a face of fear as would have excited in any one less guileless than he on was practising. Quickly recovering seized the young Baronet's arm, and

! we are overheard."

en drew him into the light to discover er. On the other side of the ruined ging from the shade which might have him from their view, they found Julian, more blanched, his demeanour more an that of Lady Sylvester's companion. us of the cause, almost indifferent as her words had reached his ear or not. and inexpressibly relieved to see that he was alon she exclaimed:

"Ah! Mr. Wilmot, you have escaped into sol tude I see. Who knows what delightful reverse we have disturbed; what images we have distroyed, perhaps banished for ever, so that the will never now be given to the living world. assure you when we came upon you, there was the painter's 'eye in fine frenzy rolling,' and your whole attitude was most picturesque and promising."

Julian's confusion was not sufficiently interesting to Lady Sylvester, nor exciting to her curiosity to detain her, and she passed on with her first companion, leaving him again in solitude to muse on any to repeat how many times, the few, the very few words of those which he had unavoidably overheard that had impressed themselves on his memory "My son's engagement to Miss Ratcliffe!"

Lady Sylvester, as they returned to the group of their friends, now collected to depart, whispered to the unhappy Sir Alfred:

"Do not forget that I have placed myself a your mercy to serve you. Keep my secret till it is publicly known, or till I give you permission to disclose it."

The young man, believing himself deeply is debted to her, wrung her hand passionately, an muttered:

"You may depend upon me."

After that night they saw him no more. Two days had scarcely elapsed when they heard of h

departure for Naples, and Lady Sylvester laughingly acknowledged to Mercedes that she was surprised certainly; that she had thought that the power of her charms would have detained him longer where he was; and then she added, tendenly kissing her blushing cheek:

"I always fancy every one in love with you, corissima; but the young Baronet, though good-looking, and good-natured, was terribly deficient here," she said, tapping her forehead. "Not that I ever think any one half so handsome as Arundel."

Mercedes blushed still more deeply at the unexpected introduction of this name, but Lady Sylvester stopped there.

Now Mercedes was really surprised at Sir Alfred Rayleigh's sudden departure; for though she did not fancy every one in love with her, she had fancied that he was. But she did not think very long or very deeply on the subject.

### CHAPTER XXVI.

Oimè! Che mia salute Sarebbe il disperare, Poichè sol la speranza È stata mia rovina!

TASSO. -AMINTA.

It is not that I love you less
Than when before your feet I lay;
But to prevent the sad increase
Of hopeless love I keep away.
In vain, alas! for every thing
Which I have known belong to you,
Your form does to my memory bring
And makes my old wounds bleed anew.

WALLER .--- THE SELF BANIS

For days after Julian had become finally vinced that Mercedes had yielded her affecti Wentworth, and that he, though he little and was wholly undeserving of them, he solved to obtain her hand, he carefully abs from again entering her presence. Instead of ing, as formerly, he shunned every place whe was likely to be; he set aside every thing the ing to him, that was in any way connected her, and vividly brought her to his mind. drawings she had commended,—the books thad procured, because he had seen her read—the flowers which she had thrown away,

cherished,—above all, those faint sketches of beauty which he had traced from memory in rs of passionate musing. All these he removed of his sight.

Ip to this time, he had never had any settled viction forced upon him that her heart was her's. If there were undeniably much in passcircumstances to awaken his fears, there was much to lull them. Until deprived of this tive kind of security, which, unsanctioned, fed a it hope, he had been himself ignorant of the tness of its power to abate the anguish of his The rude shock which he now sustained. ened him for ever from his dream. er a pleasure to him to think that he breathed same air, and dwelt among the same scenes fercedes; that they often share the same enents, occupations and thoughts. He would ly have obliterated from his memory the first on which he had beheld her. A species of atment usurped the place of the tenderness which he had ever thought of her previously. pair had taken hold of him. He wrestled with misery, and determined to fly. This resolution ed him to emerge from his self-imposed solie for the purpose of seeking Lord Sylvester, in er to remind him of his declared intention of tting Rome for Naples, and to hasten his depare by announcing his own readiness to accompany n there, in compliance with the request which patron had already made.

taught to believe that in Arundel she beheld a son worthy of such a mother's fondest affection.

A superficial acquaintance with him, particularly when he was intent on pleasing, was well calculated to make a favourable impression. Lady Sylvested discerned the advantages of their situation, but deemed herself compelled to resign them Shedid not dare to weave her web immediately under the eyes of Mr. Ratcliffe. By her prompt banishment of Arundel, she guarded against an evidence peril, but encountered another of which she on she discovered the existence by feeling its effects.

# With reason's suffrage on her side,

never been forced wholly to relinquish the guidan of her son's actions into the hands of her enem y. Her influence, though weakened and interrupted, had never been absolutely destroyed, and on the removal of its obstructress had resumed its original strength, and she found at length in Wentworth the willing and able coadjutor who was necessary to carry out her schemes. With Mercedes no very difficult task awaited her. Her first acquaintance with Arundel had sufficed to make her look forward with interest to the period when it was to be renewed. This feeling was carefully fostered by his mother, and had he met her again with the same display of eagerness for her approbation which he had shown in their first meeting, he might quickly have won her heart. But his indecision first perplexed, and then piqued her. She stood aloof with dignified reserve while his declarations were thus ambiguous; but, as we have already said, Lady Sylvester's artful insinuations would not allow absolute indifference to succeed to astonishment and displeasure. She prevented her from yielding her mind to other subjects, and kept up a doubt and an interest which she now fanned into a more lively flame.

Mercedes, if not positively certain that she loved, was conscious of an accession of happiness in the certainty that she was loved, and in the enjoyment of what Lady Sylvester so readily bestowed—a mother's tenderness. Alternate distrust and belief had banished the peace which her gentle disposition peculiarly needed, and she felt a satisfaction in the present calm which she erroneously attributed to her value for that affection of which she now confidently deemed herself possessed.

Even Lord Sylvester feared that she was becoming really attached to a man whom he considered so unworthy to awake any deep feeling. He had always entertained a hope, if not an expectation that she would not fail to discover, and to estimate at their real value, the true characters of Arundel and his mother. He had even gone so far as more than once to attempt to open her eyes to see all that was passing before them with something of the same clearness that his own did; but he found that the veil which Lady Sylvester had woven and cast over her unpractised friend was far

too blinding for her sight to pierce. He then hoped that some not unworthy rival would appear to bear away the prize from Arundel; but Lady Sylvester knew how to impede the advances of such, now did he see any that gained his unqualified approbation except the unhappy young painter, whose wild and visionary passion he did not dare to feed on hopes that he knew could never be realized. There still remained the possibility that Mr. Ratcliffe might absolutely refuse his consent to a union so little advantageous that nothing short of a conviction that his child's happiness was at stake could make him yield it. Lord Sylvester, actuated by feelings of peculiar delicacy, had always carefully abstained from stepping out of his vocation, and arrogating authority over any of the proceedings of his stepmother and her son. This desire had prevented him from revealing to the merchant his knowledge of their characters, though he had not wholly concealed from him his opinion of the dangers to which Mercedes would be exposed when thus entrusted to the care of a woman of fashion. But it was precisely because Lady Sylvester had power to confer the vain distinction of fashion on his child, that Mr. Ratcliffe was deaf to the timely warning.

From the night of their visit to the Coliseum, Lord Sylvester had perceived the change that took place in Julian; he had marked his retreat from society, and on his return to it plainly perceived that his former assumed calmness, and even frequent

spearance of enjoyment, were succeeded by a mood of despairing gloom and restless impatience. Julian did not consider himself authorized to confide his dicovery to his friend, having made it by overhearing a conversation not intended to meet his er; nor was he willing, by the acknowledgment of the effect it had worked on him, to confess the risdom of all his previous cautions. But the eagerwith which he advocated their immediate departure for Naples, followed as it immediately was by the open declaration of Arundel's suit, revealed to Lord Sylvester what he sought to conceal, and he naturally concluded that the lover's eye had more quickly discovered the signs of approaching danger than his own. Touched with compassion, and seeing how little ground there was for future hope, Lord Sylvester resolved to acquiesce at once with the painter's suggestion, and agreed on an early day for their departime.

So sincere was the interest with which the unprotected youth and ingenuous candour of Miss Ratcliffe inspired him, that he could not refrain before he left her (though to do so was alike repugnant to his inclination, and uncongenial to his character) from laying aside his habitual reserve, and addressing her in a manner which he thought aothing short of his just appreciation of the anotives of those by whom she was beset, would have authorized. He sought an opportunity of conversing with her alone, which was not now

so easy to find as it had formerly been, and began by asking her if she had any commands for him or for Mr. Wilmot at Naples.

"No," she replied; "I hope we shall come there soon ourselves."

"Not before we shall be on our way to Greece, I fear," answered Lord Sylvester. "In short, I know not when we shall be likely to meet again, Miss Ratcliffe; probably not until we shall both arrive in England."

Mercedes remarked that whereas Lord Sylvester had occasionally been used sometimes formerly to call her more familiarly by her name, since the propect of a more intimate connexion between them, he had never done so, and there was a stiffness in his whole manner towards her, altogether unlike its former frank cordiality.

"The close of a winter like this is rather melancholy," continued he. "Here are people congregated from all parts of the world forming friendships which it is very improbable that they can continue, for when once they separate now, if they ever meet again at all, it may be under totally different circumstances; and their hearts, instead of warming afresh towards each other, may find very different feelings engendered by the renewal of their interrupted intercourse. Here distinctions of rank are in a measure laid aside and forgotten, and sympathies of tasse and character allowed a fever play than in our world of London; and many here are on terms of familiar footing, who there will scarcely recognize each other. This is a fertile source of heart-burnings. You see that I am in a moralizing humour, Miss Ratcliffe. Shall you be offended if I go on to give you a little advice before this long parting which it makes me so very serious to anticipate?"

"Offended, no!" said Mercedes, "only obliged. But it is not like you to ask the question, for you have often given me advice before, and I do not know why you should be less presuming now."

"Circumstances may rob me altogether of the privilege, but I will once more avail myself of it. My advice is of a more serious nature than it has commonly been, and, therefore, may not be listened to with that readiness which it has hitherto met with. It will not come well from my lips, I allow, but I cannot refrain from uttering a caution that no one else will speak."

Mercedes now changed colour: she could not retract her consent, nor indeed did she wish to do so; but she could not listen without embarrassment and agitation, guessing as she did, what subject he was approaching. Lord Sylvester continued with a gentleness and kindness of manner that could not fail to excite her gratitude:

"I know your devoted affection for your father, my dear Miss Ratcliffe, too well to suppose that you could be induced to take any very important step with regard to yourself without his knowledge and approbation; I know also that you never would willingly permit any secrecy to exist between you; yet

here the means of communication are slow and ut certain, and I fear that your youthful inexperient should occasion a want of caution that might lead to disagreeable and dangerous consequences, and the you should be induced to forget (he said with a strong emphasis on the word induced) how very advisability is for you to avoid all acts, however trifling as apparently unimportant, that might lead the word to suppose you already in a position in which you shall have received Mr. Ratcliffe's sanction for so doing. Am I too bold, or can you pardo a freedom which only my sincere interest in you welfare leads me to assume?"

"Yes, indeed I can," replied the blushing Maccedes almost inarticulately.

"May I then add, and still not offend, the some time lies before you ere you can be calle on for a final decision? May I recommend you not to pass it carelessly; not to allow yourself to be diverted from serious thought; to consider we how much the happiness of future years depend on your present conduct? Youth is fleeting for away. Your days cannot always pass in a summer dream of pleasure, and if you hope for the enjoy ment of sober, tranquil bliss you must weigh we the motives that actuate you in the choice of on whom you must henceforth be in dependence. I me urge you not only to compare your different task and dispositions; these might harmonize althou different; but mark well wherein your princip

very, for if they are to be the rule of your lives, as they ought to be, there must be a perfect similarity between them. You have time given you for reflection, employ it carefully; and if you follow my counsel to hold yourself free until your father's apply arrive, your decision may then be guided by the observations which you make now. I hope you dearly understand my meaning. I hope I am not alarming you more than is necessary."

"No," replied Mercedes, half smiling, and yet almost weeping, "I feel the kindness by which you are actuated, believe me. I see," she added after a moment's pause, "that you think me unprotected and unadvised; but surely I am not so. I am nich in friends. Lady Sylvester's kindness to me is that of a mother," and Mercedes shed a flood of grateful tears; her full heart needed relief.

Lord Sylvester regarded her with compassionate interest.

"Miss Ratcliffe," he said at length, scarcely with his accustomed calmness, "if a time ever come when you think that you are in need of a brother, remember me, and call on me as you would on one. Will you do this?"

Mercedes, still more affected, could only hold out her hand in silence; Lord Sylvester hoping that his words would not be wholly without effect, though he feared that he had done little to guard her from danger, proffered no further caution. His own departure was to take place that night, but he was

disappointed to find, on seeking Julian, that cumstances had now arisen which rendered it imp sible for him to accompany him. He was howe satisfied with the promise he received from him follow in a few days, for he plainly read sincerity of the painter's wish to fly from scenes vested of their natural powers of pleasing, and e bittered by their association with thoughts hopeless pain.

# CHAPTER XXVII.

Quì s' assise, Quì si rivolse, e quì rattenne il passo : Quì co' begli occhj mi trafisse il core : Quì disse una parola, e quì sorrise.

PETRARCA.

THE day arrived for Julian's departure, and intending to set off at midnight as Lord Sylvester had done, he determined to see Mercedes once gain, at whatever cost, at whatever risk of bebaying his passion, of forfeiting her tranquil, unsuspecting friendship, of calling forth the ridicule of the indifferent, or the blame and sneers of those who knew him. He assured himself that he could stand the test of the moment of separation without losing his self-command, and he felt that though it be true that 'such partings break the heart they are meant to heal,' to go without seeing her again, would be still more intolerable. Accordingly he went to the house at an hour when he thought it scarcely probable that they would be absent. Great was his chagrin when he learnt that they were gone with some friends to a Villa a few miles from Rome, and would not return till dinner. The blank air of disappointment that overcast Wilmot's counter mance at this intelligence was not unperceived by the quick good-natured Italian who had given it to him. With an expression of mingled pity and cunning she added with a significant smile:

- "Eh! saranno alla festa strasera!"
- "Where?" demanded Julian eagerly.
- "Dall' Austria," replied the woman; it is their custom thus briefly to designate the embassies received in their city.

Julian lingered a little longer to question her further: he was filled with a sudden desire to enter once again the apartments in which Mercedes lived; to see her different implements of work, the books she read, the pencil she handled, lying around He made some trifling pretext to the servant to induce her to let him enter; she did so, but continued in the room with him, watching him with an air of curiosity. He walked up to the table at which Mercedes was generally occupied when be came there; in a half open drawer he saw several sketches and loose sheets of paper, some of them covered with designs by his own hand, some by How several of them brought back to his mind past conversations, and trivial occurrences! How well he remembered the remarks she had made upon this, the look she had cast upon that! Here how readily had she comprehended his meaning, there how well had she expressed some thought of her own; he bent over these things with an unwearied scrutiny, and the deep sigh he heaved moved Chiaruccia to exercise an unwonted patience in allowing him to tarry there still uninterrupted

Julian, however, with a sense of shame at the weakness he was indulging, and almost betraying to the eve of a menial, roused himself to depart, but he looked around for some memorial of Mercedes that he might bear away with him, before he If she had been present, he knew withdrew. that she would have given him any one of her drawings, or her books, or anything else that she believed acceptable to him, but the fact of its being the gift of her hand would have lessened, instead of increasing its value; very unreluctance with which it would have been proffered, would have afforded a fresh proof of her blindness to his love, and of the calmness of her own feelings. Though Julian would have recoiled with horror from the discovery of having excited any sentiments beyond those of friendship in her heart; would have upbraided himself as a traitor to her father, his generous benefactor, and would have fled from her presence with precipitation the moment he found that she shared his danger: yet in spite of the glaring inconsistency of feeling which he could not fail to detect in himself, he always experienced a severe pang on every occasion that confirmed his belief in the undisturbed serenity He hastily selected a drawing of Mercedes' mind. rom some that were lying in an obscure corner; while he viewed it with hesitation, the attention of Chiaruccia was fortunately attracted by the tinking of a bell that announced the passing of some eligious procession in the street, and throwing

open the window hastily, she leant eagerly fror and straining forward, watched it in its proguntil it disappeared. This accident had affor Julian time to secrete his stolen treasure, and then departed. He returned to his lodgings complete his preparations for his journey, with intention of attending the ball in the evening order to see Mercedes, and after a brief, he cannot how brief, an interview, after the intercha of one parting word, he intended to quit a so which he should seek only for that purpose.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

My mind misgives Some consequence yet hanging in the stars, Shall bitterly begin his fearful date With this night's revels.

ROMEO AND JULIET.

JULIAN, on his entrance into the ball-room, ingered near the door until the arrival of Lady Sylvester's party. Miss Ratcliffe at length appeared leaning on Wentworth's arm; a perfect understanding seemed to be established between them. Her smiling face was radiant with happiness; it beamed on her forehead and in her eyes; and even Wentworth's unhappy rival was forced to acknowledge that never had he appeared in such favourable colours as on this night. absence of Mrs. Annesly Marchmont relieved him from all the embarrassment that had lessened the effect of his elegance of manner, and prevented the flow of his brilliant vivacity. Lady Sylvester was more than ever caressingly fond of her young protégée, who seemed to feel no need of anything to render the festive scene one of absolute delight. On seeing Julian, she recognised him with kindness, saying:

"I thought you were already gone; I saw your

card at home, and thought you were set out f for Naples. You might have been of our per to-day."

She said this so carelessly, that Julian felt the it scarcely needed a reply, and before he could make any Wentworth led her away. This conduct of his part instantly struck Julian as intentional, an a feeling of sudden resentment increased his dis like. He saw, too, that Mercedes, now through Mrs. Annesly Marchmont's departure, without rival, was more surrounded by admirers, more be sieged by flattery, than she had ever before best To some who love (or who think that they low such an observation would have afforded pleasure Some men require confirmation from others in the love, and in their admiration. If its object be weight in the balance of fashion, and found wanting, the value for it sinks proportionably. not the case with Julian; his remark made his only the more profoundly melancholy. He would rather that the charms of her he adored shoul have been like the hidden virtues of the lowly her known but to few, and unprized by the many.

He observed that Miss Ratcliffe danced more than once with Wentworth, and that he, when at was engaged with others, stood idly by with an a of confident triumph which forced Julian to he him.

The evening passed slowly on. Brilliant as we the scene before him, there was but one point attraction in it to Wilmot. Neglected and for

gotten as he seemed to be, a feeling came over him if he knew himself to be deeply injured. Why d Mercedes waste so lavishly, smiles and words m numbers who could not prize them as he would? Why, if he attempted to draw near in the hopes of speaking to her, was he ever intercepted by some and successful applicant who bore her quickly from him? Could she be blind to his eager wish to approach her? Did she seek to thwart it? my spoke to him, moved perhaps to do so by his and countenance and apparent loneliness, he could carcely frame a coherent reply, repulsed them with reacibility, or discouraged them by listless coldness. They were soon wearied, and discontinued their adrances, and he was thus left to himself. He was not habitually repulsive, or bitter, or sarcastic, but benight he was each and all. His friend Raymond, who had often sought, and sometimes found in him ready listener, was displeased at the change; but his curiosity was awakened both by the metamorphosis, and also by finding him there so near the boar of his departure, and as he was never easily disconcerted by a rebuff, he continued beside him, seeking to elicit the real cause of that which puzded him. However, as he found his companion obstinately bent on silence, he led him imperceptibly towards a group of Englishmen, who were discussing the topics of the day, and falling into the circle, mingled in their conversation. Julian remained, in spite of his change of situation, wholly abstracted from all around him, until some familiar name seemed to catch his ear, and aroused his attention although he did not distinctly distinguish it, nor all discover how it was employed. Turning to wards the speakers who had awakened him from his reverie, he listened impatiently for what was to follow.

- "My authority," said one, "is, I fear, not to be disputed. It must be true; and we shall see it all in the Galignani to-morrow."
- "Shocking!" Tremendous!" "Unheard of ruin!" "Mad speculations!" "Wild schemes!" were the words that on all sides fell on Julian's now attentive ear.
- "Some one said that his daughter was here," continued the first speaker; "I should like to see her."
- "There, there," replied several to his inquiry; "there she is, dressed in white, with a lily in he hair. La belle des belles."
- "Poor child!" said one old man in a voice of pity, and Julian (for it was Mercedes whom they had pointed out) turned to him with all the distraction of anxiety, and exclaimed in accents of agonized supplication:

"Tell me, Sir, what you know that makes you pity her?"

The old man looked at his young interrogate for a moment; perhaps in that moment he result his heart, for he took his arm and led him kind a little apart from the crowd, and said to his gently: at gentleman is just come from Civita a, and his news from England is, that at house of Ratcliffe and Moore is bankrupt; tter ruin has come upon it, and that poor father is dead; some say that he has by his own hand, but that report has not rified."

n heard no more—his senses failed him; m swam before his eyes and he fell back-

When he recovered, he found himself rge outer saloon leading to those open for n. Raymond was with him, who, when sed his eyes, said:

il, my dear fellow, how are you now? iled you? I thought all the evening that ng went wrong with you. Is it the heat: glare of that crowded room? Come, I you home. There is old Mordaunt will: his carriage for a lift. There is an hour before you ere you need start."

n had now collected his scattered senses, ing himself, he said in a hollow voice:

, no, I must go back. I cannot go home thank you, but let me pass. Do not detain ," and passing him rapidly without further tion, he made his way back into the ball-

," he thought to himself as he hurried, "I cannot go yet. Never, perhaps, shall hat face bright, and happy, and smiling Oh, God! hours of darkness and distress

are coming upon her, and must I forsake here? She loves anothe let him stand by her; he is powerful, wealth high-born, he can protect her from every stanted to me when she was happy and prosperous, who would it be when she is in sorrow and tears!"

Still he sought it, for though this last though flashed across his mind, no selfish consideration could have impelled him to quit her. A conviction of the utter inutility of his presence prevented his from changing his design of departure; but hastened on, eager to do that little to serve he which he felt was not forbidden by honour.

He entered the room, and quickly discover the object of his search. Still Arundel was her side, and a throng around her. He fore his way rapidly, but gently, through the crow and in defiance of the frown that he saw Arundel's brow, reached her, and determined placed himself close to her, saying in a low voice

"Miss Ratcliffe, let me speak to you but few words. After I quit this room, I shall lea Rome within an hour. The morning dawn w find me far from it."

Without any hesitation, Mercedes put her a into his, and walked to a little distance from the who had surrounded her; and no one interrupt her in her course nor presumed to follow her, there was a dignity in the demeanour of Merce that won her respect, and taught those who de

ated her as the Queen of Beauty, that she would ave submission as well as mere lip homage from hose who acknowledged themselves her subjects. Not even Arundel ventured to approach. When he found herself apart from the crowd, and standing within a recess to which Julian had directed her steps, she raised her eyes to his face, as if waiting for him to speak.

"Before I bid you farewell, Miss Ratcliffe," be said in a tremulous voice, "I would allude once more to all the benefits I have received at your hands, and at those of your father, (Julian shuddered as he uttered that name, but he did not dare to alarm the daughter's heart by the betrayal of an unconfirmed report) and once more make a profession of the heart-felt gratitude which they have excited. I never hope to repay them, only I entreat you, if you are willing to add one more kindness to the many conferred, to promise me that if at any period of your life, sooner or later, you know or think that it is in my power to execute any one of your wishes, to serve you in my degree, to accomplish any task, difficult or easy of performance, that you may desire to have accomplished,—if I can defend you in any danger or distress-forgive me, Miss Ratcliffe, I forget myself. I know not what I would say. If I have offended you by my words, forgive me, and promise me, once more I ask it, to apply to me if such a es as I have described ever occur, to rely on my evotion as your mother relied on that of my mother, had been his daughter; and he said again as d said before:

oor child!"

reedes heard these words, and she turned her pickly to see from whence they came; but eaker fell back among the crowd, and she not discern him. Wentworth laughed, and it that she was mistaken in supposing that ruld be meant for her; but in spite of herid of her unwillingness to give him pain, rist into tears. Wentworth and his mother, there loading the weeping girl with caresses, the lamenting the weariness which they supto occasion this emotion, hurried her away; ie old man who, though not in sight, still d near them, muttered, not audibly:

h! her true lover is gone, and a false one the place that he should have. But he will , ere long, I suspect."

is, while those most deeply interested are blinded and deceived, the tongue of common will repeat the truths which touch them i, and bear them to every ear save the one in they might bring security.

N

I.

#### CONSTANCY.

# CHAPTER XXIX.

The bright day is gone!

CYMBEL

Mia benigna fortuna, e 'l viver lieto, I chiari giorni, e le tranquille notti, Volti subitamente in doglia e 'n pianto Odiar vita mi fanno, e bramar morte! Nessun visse giammai più di me lieto; Nessun vive più tristo e giorni e notti.

PETRA

WHEN Mercedes came to the breakfasthe following morning, the dread that strange words had inspired seemed to have away; and with a joyous smile upon her lexclaimed:

"To-day is post day from England; I s a letter from my father!"

She clasped her hands with delight, ar to Wentworth, said:

"You will fetch it for me, will you n Wentworth readily assented, for he i himself to please her in every possible manifest anxiety to succeed that touch heart.

The unhappy Mercedes was not to peaceful ignorance even for the fe must pass before Arundel could co st. She took up a "Galignani" that lay nopened on the table, and breaking the paper ound it, laid it before the fire to dry. As I so, her father's name, in larger letters than st, caught her eye: she ran it quickly over tragraph and catching the arm of Wentwho was standing near, fell senseless at his

o can describe the anguish of that day! rantic desperation — the stern disbelief — d with wild hysteric laughter, and the oh Heaven, of believing! The chilling horfeeling belief slowly creeping in, and parathe fainting heart! This it is with which aggle and fight, as the benumbed traveller himself, and resists the fatal slumber that over him, for he knows that it is the fore-of death: so do we, in our agony, repel that credence which would give the death-o hope; that assures us all is over, past, d; that there is no scope for action, for ortal wound was inflicted before we were on ard to ward it off.

e can imagine what hopelessness is but those we felt it. It seems as if life could not companionship with it, but yet it does!

Dolor che sì mi cruci, E non m'uccidi mai!

from Lady Sylvester, nor her son, could erwhelming grief of this unhappy orphan

meet with any adequate sympathy; but their or sternation and dismay equalled her own. disappointed peeress would very soon, as she beg to realise the total wreck of her mercenary hor have begun to consider herself almost as mu an object of pity and commiseration as the hear broken daughter; but the violence of Mercede agony speedily told so much on her delicate fram that Lady Sylvester's soliloquies were checked b the alarm she felt, and communicating the state i which the unhappy girl now lay to Wentwork they agreed immediately to summon medical a vice. It was well they did so; distraction of min had thrown her already into a high fever, an before night, delirium banished the reality of wo from her mind, though only to replace it by vision not less distressing.

During the many hours that elapsed before the unfortunate Mercedes became again conscious of the misery of her situation, Lady Sylvester's min was divided between the anxiety which even so could not escape with regard to the fate of the por young creature, who had been committed to be charge by a parent who had now ceased to exist and to whom she could render no account of the manner in which she should fulfil her self-arrogate duty on this side of the grave; and the eager design she felt to ascertain the real situation of her unfortunate protégée, should she survive the sickness of casioned by her grief for the loss of a parent who she loved so passionately.

Wentworth recoiled with horror when he saw in the paragraph that had met the daughter's eye, the death of Mr. Ratcliffe was attributed to his own rash hand; he dropped the paper with a shudder and concealed his face. But his mother had not long leave him to undisturbed reflections. In such an hour as this even she was agitated, and set so much of her ready self-possession as to mm, and propose, and reject, a thousand inconstent plans. Surprised to find that no letters rived for Mercedes, she, after some consideration, hich seemed to silence any scruples of delicacy, uposed to Wentworth to start for England to certain the true state of things on the spot, and is she advised him to do without delay.

"If I want any one," she said, "I will write to ylvester, and I am sure he would come back. In by no means certain that he does not love this for child himself. At all events, you do no good the. I suppose that you don't wish to get enugled for life."

Wentworth was ashamed to appear to underand the base insinuation to which his mother was at ashamed to give utterance, and for a few moacts there was silence.

At length he replied, in a voice of hesitation,

"I will not leave Rome while Mercedes is in tager."

His mother saw that she had spoken too plainly, d had actually excited disgust, even in a mind t she believed not to be superior to her own

views. She desisted, but she was not dismayed, for she read in the very tremulousness with which he spoke, that she should meet with no protracted opposition to her will. Wentworth learnt from the banker that English letters had arrived for Lord Sylvester, though not for them: and these had, in obedience to his parting directions, been immediately forwarded to Naples, so that they must remain in ignorance of their contents until they were communicated by himself. On the third day from that terrible one which laid Mercedes prostrate on a bed that seemed likely to be the bed of death, Lord Sylvester transmitted to them these important tidings. One of the lettersreceived by him was written by Maxwell, Mr\_\_\_ Ratcliffe's confidential clerk. It confirmed the account of the disastrous ruin of his master' house, but stated the falseness of attributing him death to his own violence. He expired in a fit o apoplexy, occasioned by overpowering agitations Lord Sylvester bid them to guard Mercedes carefully from the knowledge of this first report; but it unhappily reached her ears, to administer speedily as possible to the merchant's unhapp child the only consolatory truth that existed for he To this letter Lady Sylvester sent an immedia reply; whether its tone excited doubts in Lore Sylvester's mind, or whether feelings of pity for Mercedes were so strong in his heart as to impea him to return, we cannot take on ourselves to decide; we will only inform our readers that a second

utterings.

interval between these two letters was by ns uneventful. Mercedes gradually became live to all the misery of her situation. ed a heart-rending consciousness of what had 1 her, and, though in her enfecbled state, oughts were still incoherent, and her mind to pursue any subject with continuity; yet a measure began to feel all the anxiety of ainty, as well as the bitterness of grief. Sylvester, who had from the first declared her ty to witness such sorrow, and had left her to the care and attendance of her maid and vsician, as soon as she learnt that her reason estored, felt that to relieve her from the attending the belief she held as to the cirances of her father's death, would be the t act that could be performed; and after some on, she decided that the safest, the least ng way of approaching the subject with her



her that in its contents she would find great fort. He trusted that the salutary effects moving that grief which must be the most l ing to her bosom, would more than com for the passing emotion which was unav Nor was this judgment errone awakened. hitherto Mercedes had felt herself nearly de by the resolute manner in which she ha secret the agony caused by the awful believe which her mind had been impressed. She not dwell on it without feeling her brain maddened by the horrible thought. It v last that delirium had banished; it was t that reason recalled. In the anguish and of such a belief, she had made a resolution again to open her lips to any human being subject of the latter end of her father. It c violence to all her previous veneration an that she quickly had recourse to the less idea that insanity must have mastered his before he could have rushed uncalled i Maker's presence. Now this crushing son removed, and instead of it, she received th and soothing knowledge that her father h taken away from the evil days that were True it is that Mercedes' tears flowed mo fusely while she perused this letter than t ever yet done; but they were as refreshin shower to the parched earth-they were as the withered grass—and the words that dr forth were sweet as the manna in the wilde es, as she became more composed, earnestly to see Lady Sylvester, and d such tender messages to her through an and through the domestic, that she ed to shun compliance with them. She f much embarrassed by the perfect reher affection which Mercedes unhesivanifested: and when she would have a faint accents of Arundel, his mother ed over her, and silenced her with a kiss, that if she persisted in attempting to must leave her instantly. Whenever ed this threat, and left Mercedes in soliinhappy girl was tortured by reflections d to threaten to bring her back to the e grave. The silence imposed by Wentther with regard to him began to seem d mysterious. She dwelt with peculiar the thought that a foul disgrace would rest on the name borne by her father f for the ruin brought upon hundreds: appiness of many families would be for oved, and parents and children would Then there arose a torturing could she ally herself to Wentworth and unportioned, when he had sought 1? Was she to enter a family that had descension in admitting her when prosw that shame alone stripped her name y, giving it an ignominious celebrity? bitter thoughts rankling at her heart,

she resolved to hasten to set Wentworth free froe every vow that shackled him.

Arundel, in spite of the exercise of arts well are to baffle more experience and more suspicion that he had to combat, had never entirely succeeded inspiring confidence in the heart of the woman whose affection he sought. Her love, therefore, he never been perfect, for it had never been without fear. If Wentworth's present conduct show banish doubt, then would her heart become whole his:—the hour of trial was now arrived.

Accordingly the poor orphan resolved with vigour of decision which had hitherto lain dormain her character, that in her very next intervi∈ with Lady Sylvester she would send a message Arundel extorting an answer as should tell h whether she were alone in the world or not. found, however, that she had overrated her strengt While Lady Sylvester was with her she felt it a solutely impossible to approach this subject; p€ haps it was that she was sensible of the existen of an indescribable change in Lady Sylvester manner that chilled her heart and awoke apprehe sions, and silenced her when she tried to spea As long, therefore, as Lady Sylvester remained the room, she turned her face away from her, as remained silent. The tears slowly trickled dov her cheek, but she would not raise her hand wipe them away, and she stifled the sobs wi which her bosom heaved.

At length, when she heard Lady Sylvester ni≤

and move away with a stealthy step, as if she thought that she slept, she made a sudden effort, and raising her head from her pillow, turned towards her, and beckoned to her to approach. Making her lean down to her, she murmured in a scarcely audible whisper:

"Dearest Lady Sylvester, give me a pencil and a bit of paper, that I may write to Arundel!"

Lady Sylvester started; her countenance expressed alarm, and she was preparing to expostulate, but Mercedes added imploringly:

"Do not oppose me, I beseech you. I must do this. I shall have no rest till it is done!"

Lady Sylvester, in silence, complied with her request; and Mercedes, as she took the writing materials from her hand, said:

"Will you come again for it? I should like to be alone while I write."

When she found herself alone, she could not immediately proceed in the bitter task which she had imposed on herself. She even paused again to debate on the necessity for it; but her heart told her that she was only practising self-deception in thus hesitating, and she conquered the repugnance which she could not but feel.

Still she delayed the execution of her purpose; for other considerations arose in her mind, filling it with doubt and pain.

Would the communication which she designed to make outrage Wentworth's feelings? She tried to conceive what her own would be in his situa-

tion; and she pictured him to herself casting f him with scorn the imputation which the words meant to employ would tacitly convey, and smar with the wound that suspicion would inflict.

As she meditated thus, another far more aging thought sprang up. She imagined W worth reading the words that cost her so dear ill-disguised satisfaction. A sense of shame mi perhaps, for a time prevent him from ava himself of a release which in reality he coveted would he even have the indelicacy to snatc eagerly?

She covered her face with her thin, pale he and wept. She fancied that she heard Lady vester's approaching step, and hastily snatching the paper, wrote thus:

"It is impossible for me to see you yet. both our sakes it is better not to delay the words I wish to say to you. I am no longer, Wentworth, her whose hand you sought. heart feels broken though they seem to think I shall live on. Disgrace and poverty are c upon me. Do not ally yourself with them. I lease you."

The struggle was over—the effort was complet she sank back exhausted, and when Lady vester came again, she feebly pointed to the fo paper and did not speak.

The moment that Lady Sylvester had qui the room, she opened the paper, read its cont with evident exultation, and sought Wentwort

### CHAPTER XXX.

La croyance donne une sérénité, une fraîcheur à tous nos sentiments, que le doute dessêche et flétrit.—CAPEFIGUE.

Mourn'st thou, poor soul, and would'st thou yet Call back the things that shall not, cannot be? Heaven must be won, not dreamed. Thy task is set; Peace was not made for earth, nor rest for thee.

FROUDE'S REMAINS.

What was the purchase of Mercedes' struggles and tears? Wentworth and his mother commented with few of either on the words her trembling hand had scarcely known how to form. Lady Sylvester began to applicate the right judgment, the good feeling which had dictated them.

"The only step for you to take," said she to her son, "is to go from hence; return without delay to England; you will then be able to make yourself fully informed of Mercedes' real situation. She cannot blame you. She sees the thing in its true light. No one, indeed, can doubt the absolute necessity and wisdom of cutting short at once ties that cannot be continued. All delay is, indeed, cruelty to her."

"What reply," said Wentworth, in a thick constrained voice, for he was not so blind to the dishonour he was incurring as his mother deshim to be. "What reply can I give to M. Ratcliffe's note?"

"None, none," interrupted Lady Sylvesteagerly. "I will tell her that you go to rende her the sole service that remains in your power Remember," she added with increased alarm, she watched a dark cloud overcast his countenance. "I am not suggesting merely what is reasonable but what is indispensable. Can you, yourse without fortune, marry an absolute beggar? Yo know the impossibility of such folly. Why ling here then? Begone—spare Mercedes and yourse all further suspense."

"Mercedes," replied Wentworth in a solem manner, "must be made to know all this as we as you and I know it."

"Of course she shall—she does now; you sit in her own words."

"And tell her that I shall never forget her."

"I will," answered Lady Sylvester, turning aw her head to conceal the contemptuous half-smi which this speech provoked.

Wentworth departed that evening, and Merced learnt the fact from Lady Sylvester who convey it to her with all the caution and the delication that could attend such a communication.

Mercedes began to fear that she had no frien The delusion which had led her to repose confiden in Lady Sylvester and Arundel was now gradua vanishing. As yet, however, it was the wakin not the dream, that seemed unreal. She still mused on the past, rather than on the present; she thought of them as they had been, not as they were. Then would the thread of her reflections be suddenly broken by some heart-piercing recollection of what now was, and she would restlessly seek a new posture; would rise on her couch, and folding her hands, would press them to her heart, and murmur: "Am I then without a friend?"

Thus would she ask when she had been soothing baself by an imaginary enjoyment of sympathy, pouring out all her most intimate thoughts; all that pressed most heavily on her spirit; all the tarible fears that besought contradiction; all the faint hopes that needed to be assured; all the tender half-spoken appeals for pity that ought to be read before the sufferer has undergone the pain of expressing them; all the high determinations of endurance, patience, and resignation that need to be strengthened and confirmed by approbation; the weak repinings that are quickly silenced by the replies of an impartial reasoner. All these things found a place in the fancied conversations which she held, and the voice that responded to her was sometimes that of Wentworth, but still more often that of Lady Sylvester; and sometimes the wondered at their absence, and no voice answered her; and she felt in a solitude too oppressive for her broken spirit to support. Then she would weep, and say: "I have no friend!"

had power to relieve the sorrows he deplored, strength to bear her burden for her, and love to induce him so to do. And after Mercedes had prayed long and earnestly, she knew that she was not without a friend, even in all these things, such as her heart required.

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# CHAPTER XXXI.

Better a thousand such as I Their grief untold, should pine and die, Than her bright morning overcast, With sullen clouds should be defaced.

WALLER.

But he, his own affection's counsellor,
Is to himself—I will not say—how true,
But to himself so secret and so close,
So far from sounding and discovery,
As is the bud bit with an envious worm,
Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
Or dedicate his beauty to the sun.

BOMEO AND JULIET.

THE mind of Julian was distracted at the thoughts of having abandoned her for whom he would so willingly have died, and wholly occupied in picturing in the most lively colours, the anguish with which Mercedes would receive the tidings that awaited her. He upbraided himself with his desertion of her, and could scarcely refrain from precipitately retracing his steps, and turning a deaf ear to those motives which had induced him to proceed so far. When he arrived at Mola di Gaeta, where he intended to pass the night, without pausing to admire the surpassing loveliness of the spot, he entered the inn, and taking some paper from

his portfolio strove to soothe his mind by the composition of a letter which he hoped might be of some future use to Mercedes. It was addressed to his mother; he was resolved to commend the orphan to the protection of his parents, for he mistrusted her noble friends. So intense was his anxiety to impress on their minds the same feelings that he entertained, that no language of appeal he could frame, seemed to him sufficiently enbued with the pathos or the force of truth. He was writing to his mother, her from whom be never concealed his thoughts or feelings; the only human being perhaps with whom the shyness of his disposition allowed him to commune with perfect unreserve; and yet now his tongue seemed tied, and the expression of his sentiments clogged and embarrassed; and he finally closed his letter with the fear that they would be ill comprehended, either with regard to their nature, or the extent to which he carried them.

The evening of the following day Julian reached Naples; on seeking Lord Sylvester at the hotel, he found him absent. He was gone to dine at the English Embassy, and afterwards intended to visit the San Carlo Theatre, for it was a gala night. His return therefore could not be till a very late hour. Julian, directly that he heard how he had disposed of his evening, decided in his own mind, that the terrible news concerning Mr. Ratcliffe had not yet reached his ears; he then must be the first to communicate them. To look forward to an

view for such a purpose gave him the greatest; but his anxiety to see his friend, and to tell of this dreadful report was so intense that he d, fatigued though he was, it would be perly unavailing to seek for repose until he had omplished this task.

Telling the people of the house, therefore, that he ald await Lord Sylvester's return, he entered saloon appropriated to his use, and threw himinto an easy chair beside the table. His eye nced over it; there were scattered around cards different visitors of all nations, aristocrats. nmoners, diplomatists, generals, princes; -- notes i cards of invitation were thrown together,alogues and books of reference piled upon each er showed that his Lordship's hours were not wed to pass unoccupied. Julian's eye, as it veyed this heterogeneous mass, was arrested by caled letter unopened, the superscription of which saw was to himself, and in Lord Sylvester's own adwriting. At this moment a servant entered, d began to search on the table for something ich he could not find, when looking up and reiving the letter in Julian's hand, he informed n that his Padrone had left it with him to be ivered to him immediately on his arrival. He n retired, and Julian throwing himself back in chair, broke the seal with some trepidation, I read a detail of the circumstances which were adv known to him, and with which our readers wise are acquainted. The concluding words of epistle were as follows:

"Now I will not conceal from you that alt my brother, whom I left almost affianced and my mother, who has ever professed a ternal affection for her, are both beside Mea I shall feel more satisfaction in receiving to of her through you than through them. So st have I this perhaps unauthorized but irreprate feeling of anxiety on her account, that I the shall return to Rome for a short time in order what arrangements are making for her journe to England."

Julian as he finished this passage exclaime "Is it possible that he could write such a as this, and then join a party at a theatre!" was lost in amazement, and not without feeli indignation. He could scarcely reconcile the ence of that warm-hearted benevolence prompted to acts of the greatest kindness and rosity, with the absence of that tender sens with which in himself it was closely united which in Lord Sylvester's eyes was but a det ting quality,

Pampering the heart
With feelings all too delicate for use,

and alike destroying the peace of its possesso diminishing his utility.

Julian was roused from his reflections to sound of Lord Sylvester's voice, inquiring were arrived. He started up to reply but himself, on thus suddenly rising, scarcely al stand; his head was dizzy; he grasped the

for support, and when Lord Sylvester advanced towards him, sank back into the chair, and buried his face in his hands. Affected by the sight of his friend's extreme agitation, Lord Sylvester tried to soothe him, but a feeling of pride came to Jalian's aid, for he could not endure to give way to motion in the presence of one who had so completely maintained his self-possession, as to mix without interruption in the common routine of life. He composed himself therefore as speedily as possible, and the remaining hours of the night were ment by the two friends in discoursing on the melancholy subject that engaged, perhaps almost equally, the thoughts of both.

At length they separated, and when they met win, Lord Sylvester would not allow himself nor is friend to give utterance to the doubts which prevailed in both their minds with regard to the future conduct of Lady Sylvester and of her son. He felt that he was as yet unauthorised to indulge in the harsh suspicions that suggested themselves, and though they weighed too strongly with him to allow him with a quiet conscience to leave Mercedes wholly in the power of her present protectors, yet he determined in justice to them to stand, if possible, entirely aloof, and not to interfere with any proposition that they made, unless it became absolutely necessary to do so. answer should arrive to the letter which he had written to Lady Sylvester, he decided on remaining Where he was.

The unhappy Julian, in the meantime, wa state of utter wretchedness, and restless excite The agony of Mercedes was ever present to and in spite of his struggles and his self-repro he found that he could not picture to h Wentworth consoling her, without the most aggravation of his sufferings. He could not a to see Lord Sylvester remain inactive, he eve braided him openly with coolness; but his bore with him silently and compassionately. Sylvester's answer when it came, did not give Sylvester satisfaction; and yet he could se put his finger on the word or sentence in i displeased him; nevertheless he now resolve he would return to Rome. He expected the communicating this decision to Julian, he declare an intention of returning with him. ever might be his friend's wishes, he did no intend either to combat or to counsel, 1 thought that in his present state of mind best to leave him to himself. Julian re his intimation in silence, not even expr satisfaction. He proved that he had no of accompanying him, by giving him the which he had written to his mother. entreating him to place it in Mercedes' l with an earnest request that she would use of it on her return to England. signified this wish, he relapsed into s and seemed about to see his friend depart same mood of blank despair. Compassion

the lips of Lord Sylvester, though he was wounded by Julian's deportment towards him; without reproach or allusion to it, he extended his hand to the young painter to bid him adieu, when Julian, grasping it with sudden vehemence, while tears no longer to be repressed gushed from his eyes, exclaimed in broken accents:

"May God reward you for this act!" and hastily escaped from his presence.

### CHAPTER XXXII.

Di pensier in pensier, di monte in monte, Mi guida Amor, ch' ogni segnato calle Provo contrario alla tranquilla vita.

Per alti monti, e per selve aspre trovo Qualche riposo: ogni abitato loco E nemico mortal degli occhj miei. A ciascun passo nasce un pensier novo Della mia Donna.

PET

When Lord Sylvester was gone, Julian lithe utmost loneliness. He made no acquain in Naples; and if by chance he saw at a diany persons whom he had previously known where, he would escape their notice, and shur approach. He hated the gay and noisy cit mirthful crowd, and the idle throng of strang the very brilliancy of its sun seemed to mock He could not endure to remain where he was

garden beyond it, seemed to soothe him by their ceaseless voice. He obtained, without much difficulty, a lodging in it, of which he took immediate possession. Here established, he would leave a sleepless bed at an early hour, and mount the black and dreary side of Vesuvius—that gloomy monument of Nature's fury. These scenes of desolation seemed congenial to his present mood, and more than once he toiled up the steep ascent to the very summit, and mused in solitude on the rink of the yawning crater, which vomited all the thile smoke and flames. In the plains where Impeii stands he would also wander; traversing selent streets, or seating himself for hours on a Len capital near some dismantled temple. dhe employ himself, "trainant sa vie de fatiques \* fatiques, comme pour se distraire de lui Vene."

Every evening he returned to his lodgings where had engaged a boat to be at his service; into his he would spring, and bidding the man to pull im to Naples, would fling himself down in a choony silence that seemed to quell the spirits of he lively Neapolitan and still his loquacity. Thus would they proceed in unbroken taciturnity, except that the boatman would sometimes raise a strange wild song, so melancholy in its long protracted tones, that Julian would permit him to continue it without interruption. As soon as he landed, he would seek the Padrone di casa, with whom Lord lyvester had lodged, and whom he had engaged

to procure his letters for him, and taking in are that awaited him, would return whence he came.

But we will not transcribe the dispatches which Julian received, but rather prefer following Lord Sylvester to Rome in the belief that we shall be able to give a detail of many facts which were concealed from his eyes, and to elucidate many circumstances that appeared to him involved in mystery.

Night was beginning to close in when Lord Sylvester entered Rome, and he immediately hastened to the Palazzo —. The servant who answered his summons started with astonishment on recognizing him.

"Stain casa il Signorino?" was Lord Sylveste's impatient demand.

"Eh! Milor—è partito!" replied Felice, with many shrugs of surprise and dismay—"e la Signon madre—she is very ill, and Miss Ratcliffe at the point of death."

"But not now? She is recovering, is she not?"

Eh! Chi sa! She has never quitted be chamber."

"But what do you mean by saying that Mr. Wentworth is gone? Gone! When? Where?"
"To England. He departed yesterday."

Lord Sylvester paused for a moment to restrict the indignation which this reply awoke. The with as much coolness of manner as he could command, he said:

"I will go in and see Lady Sylvester."

He passed the servant and opening the door himself, stood before Lady Sylvester. She tarted on beholding him, but it was more with ismay than surprise. She sank down again on seat from which she had risen, and covered her with her hands. Lord Sylvester, confident at Wentworth's departure must have been sancmed, and probably instigated by her, was ill dissed to feel tenderly towards her. Otherwise this sible emotion, the sobs that now became audible, echange in her appearance since he last saw her, r she looked ill and harassed, and robbed by xiety of all appearance of youth, might have niched him with compassion. As it was, he aintained a rigid silence. At length, however, ading that she did not attempt to remove the undkerchief that concealed her face from his view, said with a chilling coldness:

"I find that Arundel has left you. How could do so at such a time? If I had not returned hat were you to do? And who so fit to be at liss Ratcliffe's side, in such an hour, as her fianced husband?"

"Her affianced husband!" exclaimed Lady Sylster; "that claim to be beside her had never ceived a parent's sanction, and now, alas! must rever be resigned. I need not surely explain to the impossibility of such a thing. You know for brother's circumstances. Could he exchange that the impossibility of such a thing. You know for brother's circumstances. Could he exchange that the such a surely exchange that the surely exchange the surely exchange that the surely exchange the surely exchange the surely exchange the surely exchange that the surely exchange that the surely exchange the sure

now he could only, by delaying his departure, have aggravated the pain of separation, which must eventually have been endured. Thank Heaven! he did not so selfishly consult his own wishes! No he has torn himself from her side, and is hastening to England; by so doing, he may yet in som measure serve this unfortunate girl. And let m add, that my poor Mercedes is no less alive to the propriety of this proceeding than we are. Her first thought was to declare my son free from all a gagements entered into before this fatal occurrence."

"And he accepted this freedom?" inquired Los Sylvester, without any outward sign of indignation.

"This, they both felt, was the only course could pursue that would not tend to embitter the future existence."

"Would a proof of disinterested affection had only that effect?"

Lady Sylvester reddened violently at this que tion; but evading it, she again strove to move be son-in-law to commiseration.

"I am absolutely distracted whenever I think this subject," she continued. "What am I to d How can I ever get Mercedes back to England, a to her own friends:" [Lord Sylvester was wasses by this time that the unhappy orphan vast among her own friends." "How painful think that it is quite impossible for her to track at all in the way in which she came hithe

Thy surely," exclaimed Lord Sylvester, "her as could not have added very greatly to that pourney?"

y Sylvester reddened again, and with a face usion and shame, hastily returned,

ow do you think all this will end? Surely th is gone, a respectable maintenance will be for this girl out of the wreck of her father's ous fortune?"

ear not, if her father's creditors are to be tisfied. And I am afraid," said Lord Sylwith a contemptuous emphasis on the word, the same sense of propriety that led Miss fe to give Arundel his liberty, will make her that they should be considered before her-

these words, Lady Sylvester looked quite dis-, and little pleased with the severity of Lord ter's manner, she rose, and declared herself ich exhausted to prolong the conversation. more pleasing to me if a Trust me, she will behav Collectedly.

Where of necessity, the Its own support.

In Must al

The strength to rise supe

THE next morning Lord interview with his motherthat had intervened, dur. reflected deeply, had made ner, such as might have Lord Sylvester, whose kn racter, the result of an int years, rendered it quite imp suddenly give credit to appe reality which he had hithert the existence of motives and

ency in any of her words and professions. ag could exceed the solicitude which she diswhen speaking of Mercedes; nor could the with which she treated of her affairs be She did not pretend to agree with Sylvester's views of the case; she asserted very different opinions, as with respect to the ty of Arundel's departure. While she did nceal from him that she was alive to the ce of suspicions injurious to herself in his she still behaved with a gentle firmness and of demeanour that surprised him. I plainly, though not in words, that she felt wounded and aggrieved by these doubts; id not repel them with resentment, but seemed prepared to prove them unjust by She also displayed a candour which new trait in her character, and the one least for by her son-in-law. She confessed to hen they began to discuss the best means oving Mercedes to England, that in their to Italy she had allowed the whole expense volve on her then wealthy companion, for n narrow income would have been perfectly uate to maintain the luxurious style in which ad travelled and lived; and Mr. Ratcliffe een very willing to defray the whole of spenditure up to the present time, in return advantageous position in which his daughter aced by the introduction which Lady Sylgave her into society far above her in rank.

expenses which now she knew not how to She bitterly deplored this imprudence, e because it so wholly incapacitated her from ing the smallest assistance to this destitute whom she would have rejoiced to succour hour of need. Her protection and her c all she had to give. To whom was she t for means to convey this almost dying girl the relatives she possessed?

Perhaps it will be with difficulty belied Lady Sylvester, at the moment she spoke to perfectly aware that she had still in he a considerable sum of money furnished locedes' father, but though she had not exact lated, she believed that it would scarcely than defray the debts which she had in Rome, the whole of which she was to discharge before any portion should be to the use of Mercedes.

on the necessities of her of whose wealth she had so unsparingly availed herself. He saw that her design was to throw Mercedes on his charity, and that all her protestations of affection for her, and of desire to render her all possible services, were only intended to lead him to place power in her hands. Revolting as all this was to him, he could still perceive no other suitable means of conveying Mercedes back to England but in company with Lady Sylvester, or he would gladly have rescued her from this false friend. As it was he could only sylvester's conduct that should make it, in some measure at least, such as he could desire.

After weighing the subject with deliberation, be determined to discard that delicacy which had made him abstain from any attempt to see Mercedes, and now to request to do so in order to incite her to face the irremediable difficulties of her situation as soon as possible. He easily foresaw that a time might arrive when the belief of being under pecuniary obligations to Lady Sylvester might be a most painful burden to Miss Ratcliffe; and he resolved, though he must do violence to his own feelings and to hers, to make known to her the real footing on which she stood. He found on mentioning his desire to Lady Sylvester, that she had not as yet communicated his arrival to Mercedes; she now offered to do so, but as to his further request, she replied with an air of astonishment and hauteur:

"You cannot really mean to ask this: it possible for her to comply with your wish."

"Why so?" replied Lord Sylvester drily. I came here solely to serve Miss Ratcliffe, I intend to depart without hearing from h lips how I can best do so. I do not see the sibility of which you speak, nor, perhap she."

Lady Sylvester, though greatly alarmed a pleased at this proposition, did not dare to compliance. She went to perform her tas when she returned, in an altered tone, she s "You were right; Mercedes will see you is quite as anxious to do so as you could She is going to rise for the first time, and you as soon after noon as you please. Fix you and I will be ready to accompany you to he

"Thank you," replied Lord Sylvester, degree relaxing from his former inflexibilit should wish to visit Miss Ratcliffe alone. this interview must be, and I believe that it far better for me to see her alone, than in t sence of any other person."

Lady Sylvester could not venture on the sion of any dissatisfation, eager as she warelieved from the embarrassments of her situation.

When Lord Sylvester prepared for this view he remembered the letter which Juli entrusted to him, and resolved to take this

ength the appointed hour arrived, and Lady ster conducted him to the door of the chamn which was Mercedes. When he entered zeheld her whom he had left so young, so t and blooming, he was inexpressibly shocked, the idea crossed his mind that she was desto be but for a little while the sport of ne, or the victim of unkindness. a couch, and her frame seemed attenuated nfeebled to an almost incredible degree. The · had entirely fled from her cheek and lips, the ghastly paleness of her hue was increased er mournful garb, and the heavy negligent s of her dark hair that hung around her face. ome time she did not make any attempt ak or to move; a cold dew stood upon her which assumed even a more ashy paleness. could not weep, tears were denied her; she death-like oppression, and lay almost insensind more resembling a marble statue than a being.

rd Sylvester, in spite of his efforts, in spite of esire for her sake to be calm, could not refrain tears. He seated himself beside her, and g one of her hands, which was icy as death, and it tenderly to his lips, saying in a voice sly audible from emotion:

dercedes, I must be your brother. You must forward think of me in no other light. You lay your cares upon me. Speak to me, Merit will relieve you to tell all that lies at your You must not think yourself alone."

Mercedes drew away the hand he held, a ing it to her other, clasped them upon he and raising her eyes with fervour to Hea murmured:

"No, I am not alone!"

Her lips continued moving as if in pra even in that hour of anguish Lord Sylves ceived the dawning of holy peace within h bled breast. After a pause he said gently

"Will you accept me as a brother, Merc "Yes," replied Mercedes, in a low vo with a shudder she added, "until you chan

"So be it," answered Lord Sylvester, s
"until I change." He paused, then he cc
"If I am to be your brother you must
tell you what I would counsel you to do.
already thought on what will be best for yo
will arrange every thing, and render it c
practicable, if you will follow my advice. I
I leave you now and come again?"

"No," exclaimed Mercedes, "stay with Oh!" she said, for the first time bursti tears, "indeed I do not desire to be so mucl

Lord Sylvester touched by these we her weep unrestrainedly, and offered no con her tears. As she became gradual posed again, he told her that he advisas soon as she could travel, to proceed to England under Lady Sylvester's protect explained to her that he would prevent previous arrangements, any of the cares journey from devolving on her, and beso

not to hesitate to allow him for the present to afford her every facility in her return home that was necessary. He said his own arrival in England would probably be but a few months later, and he implored her not to turn her thoughts to the transaction of business, until he or some other friend on whom she could rely, was on the spot with her. "It will be only harassing your mind uselessly, and, I believe, that your interests are as safe as they can be, in the hands of Maxwell and of the executors, who are men of high chaneter." He ended by giving her Julian's letter, which he advised her to transmit to his mother as soon as possible, and also to apply to any of her own relatives whom she should select as soon as the reached England. He tried to hold out hopes of kindness on Lady Sylvester's part, but more particularly added: "in Wilmot you have a friend actuated by the most devoted sentiments of gratitude, and prepared to serve you at the cost of any efforts or sacrifices, and I doubt not that Mrs. Wilmot will welcome you with a mother's love."

To these kind and soothing words, Mercedes listened with silent tears. She acquiesced in all Lord Sylvester's suggestions, nor could she refuse services which were absolutely indispensable. She comforted herself with the hope which Lord Sylvester lent her every encouragement to entertain, that the pecuniary favours she was constrained to accept were but of a temporary nature, and though she made no complaints, and scarcely any allusions to her friend-

lessness, nor spoke of Lady Sylvester's alt she could not listen without evident sa while Lord Sylvester made her aware th former friend would now bestow upon a continuance of her protection, and that : not, in their journey homewards, have to situations with her, and to receive from those gifts which she had formerly so la stowed. Though Mercedes scarcely mentic Sylvester and never once her son, Lord Sylvester covered, without difficulty, that her opinion dergone a complete change with regard Lord Sylvester finally informed her, that af completed all requisite arrangements, l again leave Rome. When she heard thi him bear her thanks to Julian, and strove him herself, but words could not express of her feelings, and she saw him depart and tears more eloquent than language c been.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

THOUGHTS IN PAST YEARS.

When again deprived, by Lord Sylvester's departure, of the solacing presence of a sincere friend, Marcedes felt more than ever wretched. Her misery became almost insupportable, and at times she contemplated her situation with dismay, deeming it impossible that in such intolerable anguish, she could continue to possess life and reason; one or the other would surely abandon her. A command to lay down the first would have been a glad bidding to the unhappy orphan, and in hours of distraction the would sometimes exclaim:

"Oh, when will the hour of death come! What mains of death could compare to these! When may I die! When may I go hence, and be no more een!"

But there was another voice besides that of Vature speaking in Mercedes' bosom, and while he latter cried loudly in the wildest accents of voe, the first in still small tones, the clear sweetness of which, made them heard in spit shrill din of tumultuous passion, uttered truths of a nature so divine, that they her gradually inaccessible to all contrary and filled her mind with a strength that all warring adversaries of her peace, and the mastery in that conflict, wherein made the human heart in which lies the field of mortal strife, can alone be victorio

Grief may be forcibly expelled from t it has invaded. The aid of exterior when sought, and is sometimes powerful e obtain possession of that place to which advanced a claim. The call to mourning gotten, and reckless mirth is by force where sorrow should be sitting upon th These measures are desperate, and their fatal, for those who employ them do but a peace, where there is no peace,' and for ev that blessing which is promised to those wh But Mercedes had no temptation to There were no exterior circumstances as to distract her from herself, and bear from her grief; she was forced to encou all its sternness: but she discovered c better means of divesting its sting of half nancy, and of fortifying herself against th of an enemy, who, contemplated from peared invincible. She found that feeble as she was, could she assume that armo is prepared and appointed for all the

Christ,—for the weak and sickly not too weighty, and equally indispensable for the strong and the experienced—she would be endued with a strength to resist, and a fortitude to endure that no advermies nor hardships could quell. She felt that the unceasing contemplation of gospel truths, the unceasing study of gospel precepts, afforded to her fainting soul that support which wholesome food gives to the body. Perpetually drinking at that fountain from which she found that she drew living waters, Mercedes rose up refreshed, invigorated, and enabled to stem the torrent of ill-fortune with resolution that amazed Lady Sylvester, who had known her 'in her softer hours,' and little disposed to give her credit for innate vigour of character, was at a loss to discover the origin of that strength which she now displayed.

To her eyes it was not discernible, that from the germ of religion, when firmly rooted in the heart, springs up a goodly tree overshadowing the land, beneath whose branches, the believing pilgrim on his journey, finds an acceptable shelter from the blasts of the East wind in the day of adversity, and from the scorching rays of the noontide sun in the day of prosperity, secured alike from the dangers of either extreme. She had not discovered in the gentleness, sweetness, and truth that marked Mercedes' character; in the total absence of art, and of every feeling of jealousy and malice; in the warm generosity and benevolence of her heart;—the uninterrupted sway of one pervading principle,



Her bounty, sweetness, beauty, goodness, sucl That none e'er thought her happiness too muc So well inclined her favours to confer,

And kind to all as Heaven had been to her.

But her knowledge of the faultlessness of M conduct in her former situation had not let look for a display of qualities befitting the of fortune which she had experienced. not that Mercedes was still under the direc the same guide, still actuated by the same that she had one sole example to which she That of Him whose prec to be conformed. culcate alike self-abasement in the hour of ness, and serenity, and patience in that of suf ---who led her to seek the lowest seat in the h feasting, and bid her be grateful, were it the crumbs that fell from the children's te who taught her by His own example not to draw her lips from the bitterest cup humanitu aan drink. nou did aha aaale

by resolutely closing her eyes to the future. determined to fulfil to the letter the injunction to take no thought for the morrow, and to apply herself solely to that task which called for all her vigour, the endurance of her existing sorrow. this means she shut out the crowd of imaginary evils, perhaps never to be realised, and sufficient indeed for the day was the evil thereof. to accustom her sad heart to bear with the knowledge that her beloved father was dead—that she never was to see him again—never to cling to his bosom again—never to speak to him again—never to be spoken to by his voice again—never to consult him again-never to ask any favour or indulgence from him again—never to cheer him in hours of fatigue or depression again-never to share the buoyancy of mirth with him again-never to kneel at Heaven's throne with him again—never again to enter with him the visible temple of their God, together to utter praises and offer prayers.

This was enough. Mercedes felt that it was better to strive to reconcile herself to this grief before she went on to encounter others; before the went on to calculate future evils, and the difficulties, dangers, and distress, that probably awaited her on her return to her native land. Conscious that she was destitute of any means of making provision against the coming tempest, she averted her eves from the gloomy prospect.

THE RENEWANT OF HE

Faith was her comfort, faith her stay. She trusted woe would pass away, And evil yield to good. She knew that dark as were the clouds that now lowered, they might unexpectedly be illumined, or even dissipated by a sudden ray of sunshine. If she looked onward to the future, it was to one more distant still, but the promises of which were secure; her gaze was directed far on to the land which is "a delightsome land;" where the glorious sun "shall no more go down," never yielding to the shades of night, for sleep is not needed to refresh the weary, nor to bring forgetfulness to the wretched, for there "the days of mouning are ended."

Thus abstracted from the cares of this world, thus fortified against its keenest sorrows, the same means enabled Mercedes also to submit in patience to all the inferior wounds, provocations, and slights, which she too frequently received from her heartless companion:

Yoked in her gentle mood To stern annoyances of petty strife That weary the worn spirit out of life.

She manifested no resentment, whatever were the unkindnesses of Lady Sylvester, and they were many—not always definable, but not therefore the less galling. The indelicacy with which she would fall on topics which Mercedes scarcely dared to approach in thought—remembrances which in the night season would steal into her mind when between sleeping and waking, making her restlessly change her position, as if to escape from the pressure of a crushing weight, or to remove out o

of the agonizing vision that rose up before hantoms which, haunting her, would someause her to start up from her sleep, waking by the sharp cry of anguish which she
—forebodings which she did not dare to ate, but whenever they suggested themwould strive to turn speedily to some t, or better still, some occupation distinct to subjects which gave them birth—all these of exquisite pain were but too often opened reless word, an unkind hasty expression, an i counsel, a cruel hint from the lips of Lady er. Still she never by a gesture of impabut seldom by a burst of supplicatory tears, i her half wilful, half unconscious tor-

r Sylvester herself was beyond measure asd at the extraordinary calmness and equamaintained by Miss Ratcliffe; and, unnatural rbarous as it may seem, she was at times d by it. She one day declared to a lady, narked on it in terms of mingled surprise niration, that for her part the girl's insensipsolutely amazed her. "She never seems," laimed, "to feel that she is, in all probability, r—that she has lost station, respectability, ning!"

hink she feels that she has lost a father," reply which brought a tinge of shame to vivester's cheek, and her reprover longed to

# END OF V(

# CONSTANCY

AND

CONTRITION.

VOL. II.



# CONSTANCY

AND

# CONTRITION.

S' onesto amor può meritar mercede, E se pietà può quant' ella suole, Mercede avrò.

PETRABCA.

The crime of old, which seemed long dead
Lifts up again its head!
THOUGHTS IN PAST YEARS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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# CONSTANCY.

## CHAPTER I.

There's not a virtue in the bosom lives
That gives such ready pay as patience gives.
That pure submission to the ruling mind,—
Fixed, but not forced—obedient, but not blind;
The will of Heaven to make her own she tries,
Or makes her own to Heaven a sacrifice.
And is there aught on earth so rich, so rare,
Whose pleasures may with virtue's pains compare?
This fruit of patience, this the pure delight,
That 'tis a trial in her Judge's sight.
Her part still striving duty to maintain,
Not spurning pleasure, not defying pain.
Never in triumph till her race be run,
And never fainting till her work be done.

CRABBE.

LADY SYLVESTER could by no means emulate the serenity which Mercedes displayed, nor bring her mind to contemplate tranquilly the utter disappointment of all her own plans, and she was actually cruel enough to feel aversion towards the unhappy orphan whose misfortunes had occasioned their overthrow. She had often been galled and

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provoked by the weight of the fetters which she has imposed upon herself, by the constant parade a fondness which she had thought it expedient to display, and the necessity of acting with apparent disregard of self, and submitting to a compliance with Mercedes' wishes sometimes when in opposition to her own. Now that the call for restraint was removed, she seemed to seek revenge for her temporary submission to it, by indulging all the capricious, haughty tyranny of her nature; and her domestics were not so much the slaves of her captious whims as this unhappy girl, who was too sick at heart to summon up resolution to repel the encroachments daily made by her harsh protectress. She could not nerve herself to demand more respect or more consideration, but contented herself in silence with the little of either accorded her. and even that little became daily less. At length, however, this most miserable journey came to a close; and on their arrival in England Mercedes felt that her misery, if not relieved, would be varied.

Lady Sylvester could not refuse to the unprotected orphan who had so nearly become her daughter, an asylum in her house until some further provision could be made for-her; but when she signified the favour which it was her intention to confer, she embittered it by pointing out at the same time the propriety of an immediate application to her nearest relatives, intimating that it was more fitting that she should be indebted to them for the relief of her present wants than any

rurdensome to one on whom no ties of blood rany claim. Alas, poor Mercedes! she few relatives, and among them she felt had less right to look for friends than ter acquaintance, for her father had purtept her aloof from them. She shrank idea of seeking aid from those who perd regarded him not even with cordiality. The moment that she entered Lady Sylhouse, she was made to feel the complete he change that had taken place with regard

ippose that all my orders have been obeyed," ly Sylvester to the servant who received nd turning to Mercedes, she added: re is a room up stairs prepared for you, tcliffe; Croft will take you to it, and if you ued," (the poor girl, trembling with emowell as overcome with weariness, looked as to faint,) "you had better order something self there, and not leave it again to-night." edes murmured her thanks, and clinging to ffered arm of the servant (who regarded red person with an air of compassion, but se demeanour, by the very different mode ess employed towards Miss Ratcliffe by her , to that which she remembered before their e, was infused a familiarity bordering on t.) allowed her to lead her to the chamber her. The meanness of it, and its immediate to that occupied by her not unkind attendShe then, with an alacrity which she in Mercedes to interpret as kindness, and to I sequently grateful for, declared her readiness ther that very day to see her cousin Mrs. Jo whose name Lady Sylvester could now rem But poor Mercedes only turned away her: the wall, and murmured that she did not that she should be able to reach her so soon.

"Perhaps you would like better to write to asked Lady Sylvester, a little ashamed of he cipitancy, and adopting a more soothing ton

Mercedes made no reply.

Her Ladyship waited awhile in silence; her brain soon marked out a plan of action.

"When you rise, my dear, you shall v short note, of which I will myself be the l for I see that you had better remain perfect! for the remainder of the day."

Mercedes offered no opposition to the concentrated in these words. Lady Sylvester la

lust rouse herself to do. At last, with an she raised herself, and rang the bell, though wretched state of dependance in which she as, she scarcely dared to summon a domestic. aid came; but not with all the speed with the services required by Miss Ratcliffe had y been performed. From her she procured materials, and announced her arrival to her in a note as brief, and as little supplicatory rentured to make it; she then, having first t, sent it to Lady Sylvester, and sank down n her pillow, which was soon moistened by s which this painful effort cost her. ion, though not made without most fervent to Heaven for its success, inspired little deriving any comfort from it. Mercedes bered well that all intimacy between her and herself had been checked by her father, unt of the glaring vulgarity of manner that d him, while she herself shrunk from coming ntact with an equal vulgarity of mind and nts, of which, undisguised as it was by the of good breeding, she easily detected the ex-

Mrs. Johnson had more than once indirect dissatisfaction at the absence of faminetween her and her cousins, who were of nage, and had not scrupled to hint that she t so near a relative should be more willing ow on them a share of those advantages she enjoyed in a greater measure; and not aged, though displeased, by the coldness

with which Mr. Ratcliffe heard this species of mark, reiterated an always unsuccessful attemp thrust her daughters upon Mercedes as companio while she, without any feelings of pride or unki ness, in obedience to her father's wishes, doing no violence to her own, uniformly resis these bold advances, which, by their want of de cacy and dignity, little disposed her in favour those who made them. It now remained to proved whether Mrs. Johnson would be found m desirous to establish the cordiality of relations between them, or most eager to retaliate the sligh which she had received, and to escape the burd of the orphan's woes. Lady Sylvester took M cedes' letter, and set out firmly resolved that I cousin, however disposed towards her young re tive, should on no pretext refuse to receive h under her roof.

## CHAPTER II.

Her look and mind At once were lofty, and at once were kind. There dwelt the scorn of vice, and pity too For those who did what she disdained to do.

So fast, so faithful, loyal, and so true, That a bold hand as soon might hope to force The rolling light of Heaven, as change her course.

WALLER.

To find Miss Ratcliffe's cousin whom she had so readily undertaken to seek, Lady Sylvester had to bend her course further east than she was accustomed to do. On entering the handsome mansion in ---- square, which the opulent banker's family now occupied, evident marks of affluence indicated that he was beginning to vie with all the pride of wealth in which Mercedes' father had indulged; but there was a total absence of the elegance and taste that had always distinguished every thing belonging to Mr. Ratcliffe. Nor was there a less striking difference between the deportment of the mistress of all this costly splendour, and the unobtrusive, and graceful manner peculiar to Mercedes. Mrs. Johnson, as soon as the name of her visitor reached her ear, was not altogether at a

"My dear Cecilia," replied her mother, in a querulous tone, that spoke her unwilling to acquiesce, and afraid to expostulate, "we must wait a little. Your papa, you know, is absent."

"What then?" interrupted her daughter; "he I be so glad to find her here when he returns. When may she come?" she continued, turning Lady Sylvester, without any manifestation of ar. "When may we fetch her? When may I see

These interrogations were so much what Lady vivester wished, that she did not resent the tone which they were made; but graciously replied:

"Indeed, I must not decline for Miss Ratcliffe in visits of any of her relatives, for I know she much wishes to see them."

"Well, then," said Miss Johnson, "let us order to carriage at once, mamma, and go to her."

"You will find Miss Ratcliffe (she had not once led her Mercedes throughout the conversation) by ill; totally changed from what she was."

"I have never seen her," interrupted Cecilia.

"She had not risen from her bed when I left

"Perhaps, then, she will not be able to remove ther yet?"

"Oh! so short a distance—and to be among own family again will do her good," replied dy Sylvester, rising to depart. But as she said we words she remembered so vividly the pitiable te in which she had quitted Mercedes, that she

could not venture to allow her to be besi visitors. She reluctantly determined to r permission she had given, for she feared to a recurrence of all her past tedious illness consequence to be constrained to adm continuance under her roof. Not only all these cousins would undoubtedly be re she was thus situated to bestow their attention upon her, and her house would by a vulgar crowd. These timely reflect imentation in her plan. Lady Sylvester address Johnson with a stateliness of manner the room for dispute, saying:

"On consideration, Miss Johnson, I to your visit must be deferred till to-morrow indeed, you would like to accompany I would take you back in my carriage cousin, and your own could come at any desired. But more than one visitor, I Miss Ratcliffe is unequal to receive."

Cecilia's eyes sparkled with satisfactio proposal, which she most readily accept feetly aware how repugnant all her propo to her mother's preconcerted plans, wi to her unfortunate cousin, which had bee ject of much family discussion, she glad herself of this means of shelter from the i storm that would have fallen on her her departure of their august visitor. Wing the room to prepare to accomp

Sylvester, she was seized with sudden dismay at the idea of the manner in which her mother might be disposed to entertain her during her absence. It was not impossible that she might strive to set her wit against her daughter's, to seek to throw obstacles in her way, and to thwart her designs. Against such dangers she promptly guarded by turning back, and saying with an earnestness that besought compliance:

"Dear mamma, will you come with me to my room, that I may learn how you would wish me to proceed without delaying Lady Sylvester more than is necessary. I am sure that her Ladyship will excuse your absence."

Lady Sylvester bowed a ready acquiescence, and Mrs. Johnson silenced, baffled, and enraged, followed her daughter, who quickly betrayed how little real intention she had of consulting her. But though she rejected advice, to rebuke she was forced to listen. She heard it mutely, nor did its outpouring impede her progress. Her mother upbraided her with arrogance; but Cecilia had for some time maintained a supreme rule at home, which was not to be overthrown in a day. tiles she commonly won her way with good bunour and smiles, but now she was inwardly chafed by her knowledge of her mother's sentiments, and of what her conduct would have been. 'The very virtue of compassion' was touched in her, and she regarded with impatient scorn the cold prudential motives, and the ebullitions of longharboured resentment, which retarded her mother advances towards the unhappy orphan, whom a desired to see her receive with open arms. Burning with indignation, she could not stoop to make use supplications and caresses, as she might have do on a lighter occasion. She was determined take her own course, and to overpower all opposition. She knew that she could do so if all would, and had no fears of ultimate failure. If she completed her toilette, and snatched up his gloves to depart, she said hastily, speaking for the first time:

"I shall be back soon, mamma, and then I ho you will be pleased with what I have done. must send the servant for me: I don't want t carriage. I shall bring you word when Merced will come. You must think where you will pla She has been very ill, you know, so must make her comfortable. How fortunate th the house is so empty and quiet just now! Ms garet and Frederick both away! Let her be ne me, mother, pray; here in Margaret's room you please. Let me see," she added, provoking "how is it we are related? I have heard you s so, many times, but not very lately. Oh! I.1 member, first cousin, once removed, is not the Good-by, I really must not make her Lac ship wait, must I? Have you any thing say before I go? Don't give me messages, can invent them." So saying she hastily 1 down stairs, and Lady Sylvester's carriage whir

from the door before Mrs. Johnson, in great consternation, had reached her drawing-room in order to take leave of the most distinguished guest that had ever entered its doors. When she found it vacant she seated herself on the sofa and felt halfdisposed to cry with anger and vexation. But this intended relief she was content to suspend on the entrance of another daughter, too awkward to appear before, but now coming with a face of wonder to know what had occurred, and how the apparition of a carriage with a Viscountess's coronet standing at their door for full half an hour, could be explained otherwise than supernaturally. It was some consolation to Mrs. Johnson to be able to pour forth all her grievances, doubts, difficulties, and demurs, without fear of contradiction; but her small opinion of the strength of Rose's understanding gave her discourse rather the character of a soliloquy, than of an appeal for sympathy or counsel.

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"I never in my life knew such a girl as that Cissy. This comes of all the spoiling which she has had at home and abroad. To hear how she took upon herself—just as if she was sole mistress here; and how she spoke to her Ladyship, dictating to her, as much as to me! How she said this must be done, and that must not be done; and she must go there, and Mercedes must come here; and without the least bashfulness, I assure you, addressing herself to my Lady, who looked all the while as proud as Lucifer! She treated her with as little ceremony

as though she had known her as long and as intimately as her poor cousin has. And why did she come here? I think I can tell you that, though Cissy would fain make us believe all the world save herself to be as blind as moles. Why, just to push that poor thing off her hands, and to thrust her upon mine! And why this should be, I should I am sure there was little enough like to know? of affection shown to us by her father or herself during his lifetime: why should we support his child in beggary? Let her stay among the great friends for whom she left us. But it is of no use standing against Cissy, if she once sets her heart on a thing. Your father upholds her right or wrong. To be sure she is sensible and clever enough to find out the right generally, but then she has strange romantic notions, and is like no one else in this world, and is so headstrong; but after all, perhaps, it is better than being a poor, weak, thing without sense or spirit," said Mrs. Johnson, casting a look of contempt on the vacant staring countenance of the girl who had listened to this long tirade, appearing all the while quite at loss to comprehend its meaning.

Having come to the uncontrovertible conclusion that it was of no use to attempt to stand against Cissy, Mrs Johnson resigned herself to the necessity of receiving Mercedes into her house if Cissy so willed it. But although she habitually regarded Cecilia as a prodigy of talent and wisdom, and was willing as about with more show, than reality of resistance

to all her plans, she did not neglect to revenge herself for the heavy yoke which was thus imposed upon her, by frequent ill-humour, taunting speeches, and unwearied perverseness in trifles; at the same time in all seasons of difficulty casting herself helplessly on her, and looking to her to make those decisions, and those efforts to which she felt herself unequal. Such conduct as this could not inspire respect in one endowed with ardent feelings, and strong sense, in no common measure. It produced a species of contempt that led her to act with a decision, and self-confidence, which, had she felt more reverence for those around her, she would never have displayed. The many disadvantages of her situation had rendered her manner not prepossessing. Vulgar affectation she laughed at and despised; insincerity and flattery she abhorred and exposed; but while she indulged herself in a frank arowal of her own sentiments, and in just sarcasm with regard to such in others as her penetration detected only to blame, kindness always marked her demeanour towards those she loved, and deference, towards those she respected. She was not easily convinced, because unused to bow her understanding; but if conviction of error reached her, she was the first to avow it with perfect candour. Constrained to rely on herself in preference to others, she became presumptuous, and was disposed to be severe; but the generosity of her disposition rendered her capable of the most devoted affection for those whom she discovered to merit admiration and esteem.

## CHAPTER III.

But, oh! the heavy change! As killing as the canker to the rose, Or frost to flowers that their gay wardrobe wear, When first the whitethorn blows.

MILTON.

I pity thee—even to anguish.

COLERIDGE.

WHEN Lady Sylvester and Cecilia reached——street, they heard in reply to their inquiries concerning Mercedes, that she had not risen, but was still asleep.

"Oh! do not let me awake her, pray!" exclaimed Cecilia, "I will steal quietly into her room, so quietly as not to disturb her, and there I will remain until she wake up of herself, and if I am sent for, the servant can wait till I inquire for him. It is not late."

And she followed the maid eagerly to the door of Mercedes' chamber, and stole in, as she had said, so quietly as not to cause one restless movement on the part of the slumberer; and placing herself beside the couch, turned her eyes eagerly on the face of one whom she had never yet seen, but whom she already regarded with so much interest. During the days of her prosperity she

had heard much of her rare and brilliant beauty, and had discovered that the remembrance and the dread of it. now assisted to steel her mother's heart against her admission into their family, for would it not, though shrouded in grief and poverty, have power to eclipse her daughters' charms, and to ensuare the affections of her son? Such was one of Mrs. Johnson's fears; perhaps the one but told most against the interests of the poor phan. Cecilia, therefore, as she now gazed on hat faded form, asked herself if that wan cheek. vollow sunken eye, and colourless lip threatened a langerous rivalry of all competing charms? Was his the merchant's beautiful daughter? If so, That must have been the sufferings that had so enfully changed her! As this thought touched r heart, she felt an interest spring up beyond rhat the most glowing loveliness could have inpired; and she continued to gaze through her ears, till she clearly discerned what might have be beauty of features cast in so faultless a mould, bough now sharpened and attenuated by disease ad sorrow. While fancy restored to that cheek be bloom of health and youth, to that lip its coral be, to that brow a sweet serenity, and pictured an beaming with light and intelligence, from seneath the fringe of the long dark lashes that ment her cheek, Cecilia saw a form arise before her gifted with rare loveliness; but still this image tell short of what reality had once been.

During the long hour for which Cecilia watched

for Mercedes' waking, she had time to fi thousand visionary plans of kindness; and to feel impatient that she should wake to cipate in the sister's love which her hea already bestowed. At length her wish was fied; Mercedes unclosed her eyes; she distressed by the ardent gaze which they encou from Cecilia's dark orbs, which were fix upon her, and closing them again, made a effort to turn away.

Cecilia bent over her impetuously, ar claimed:

"Mercedes, don't turn away from me. your cousin. I am come to stay with you."

Mercedes only murmured in answer to t

- "Where am I? This seems all straume," and she looked around, and on Cecilia out recognition.
  - "Who are you?" she said.
- "Your cousin, Cecilia Johnson." The t flashed across Cecilia's mind of the antipath! Mercedes Ratcliffe and her father had bee posed to entertain towards her family, a added eagerly, and with a slight resentment need not dislike me. You do not know I have never seen me before: and now I as

tation it caused her was more than she had strength to sustain. She could only press her hand to her head, as if supplicating for quiet; and Cecilia, coming suddenly to a sense of the folly of her impetuosity, how little it befitted the situation in which she had placed herself, and the injurious effects it might have, drew the curtains round the poor invalid, and by silent care sought to soothe her back into tranquillity. These judicious measures were gradually successful; Mercedes' troubled mind slowly returned to consciousness of all that had gone before; and she was able to hail the prompt arrival of her cousin, as the harbinger of future kindness.

Before the hour to part came, Cecilia and Mercedes felt that they understood each other, and Cecilia went away happy in the conviction that she had already inspired her cousin with a confidence in the truth of her affection, and rejoicing in the permission which she had persuaded her to give, that on her return home she might make any arrangements which she thought would be most conducive to her comfort and welfare.

The result of this was, that in a few days Meredes, without the faintest show of unwillingness on the part of Lady Sylvester, and in total ignorance that any difficulties had been encountered, and overcome by her zealous friend, was removed to Mr. Johnson's house. There, under the tender are of Cecilia, she gradually regained her strength, and enjoyed a repose that was little disturbed by

the other part of the family, at present com only Mrs. Johnson and Rose. Cecilia declar fect quiet to be essential to her recovery, an suffered her to emerge from her own little room, except to accompany her in an evening so fearful was she that want of delicacy mother, or want of tact in Rose should her sensitive feelings.

## CHAPTER IV.

My desolation does begin to make a better life. You are as welcome ..... as I Have words to bid you; and shall find it so In all that I can do.

SHAKSPEARE.

"MERCEDES," said Cecilia to her beloved charge, one morning as they were seated together in her favourite boudoir, "I have formed a plan for you, and I shall be very much grieved if you are not pleased with it."

"Well, then, I will be pleased," answered Mercedes, trying to summon a faint smile to her lips as she spoke.

"Oh!" continued Cecilia, abruptly, "I do not mean pleased with me, but with the plan. I am going to take you to our villa at Richmond. You know that Margaret and Frederick come home tomorrow; they will fill the house with noise. You will be glad to be away from them—now don't any that you will not be glad, because I must know them best. The fresh country air, too, will do you much more good than this hot square, and green needows will be more refreshing to your eyes han these dusty trees. So papa will take us there a Saturday, and stay the next day with us, and

on Monday we shall be left quite alone. Now you will let me carry my plan into execution, will you not?"

Mercedes tried to speak, but she could not; there was something delightfully soothing in the idea of perfect retirement which Cecilia suggested, and in the prospect of being entirely alone with her. She began to say that Cecilia was too good, too kind, but tears checked her speech, and she could not proceed.

"Too kind!" repeated Cecilia. "No one ever before called me too kind. It is very pleasant to me to see that you fancy me good and amiable; but when you are stronger, and better able to take care of yourself, and know more of me, you will think me less so."

"I hope not," replied Mercedes, with earnest surprise, for she saw that her cousin, though she spoke abruptly, spoke with deep feeling also.

Cecilia was led to make this proposition to Mercedes from having remarked with sorrow, that although she had appeared to derive benefit from her first removal, the improvement had been merely temporary, and after a few weeks, her check was again as pale, and her eye as heavy as when first she saw her. Though the care with which she ensured her tranquillity in her present abode, seemed to soothe her, yet she did not see that she made that rapid progress in regaining strength and health, which her eager wishes demanded; and she anticipated with the

ardour the beneficial effects of removing the fresh air of the country, and of ly peaceful scene which would be presented thither they were going.

10pes, however, were not to be immediately

The home to which she conducted Mersi indeed a lovely one; but no sooner was ablished there, than she appeared to be with an unconquerable unwillingness to reven to speak. She was too languid to rate any emotion, or the slightest preof one thing over another. No colour reo her cheek, no brilliancy to her eye, no to her step.

s to her "no joy to live;" she would sit for ilent and unemployed; she was indeed too o continue the slightest occupation long . Yet, as she never made any complaint, ressed the smallest want, Cecilia was at a v to proceed with her. She saw with ret, that Mercedes entertained

riew of days to come that was not sad; ad as life with all its hopes resigned, ad as aught, but guilt, can make mankind.

act was, that this prostration of mental and trength sprung in a great measure from the al tension which had preceded it. It was y over exertion, and over fatigue, succeeded a proportionate lassitude. All that outlimness which Mercedes had maintained by Sylvester, from the time that she learnt

to know her, appeared entirely lost when a herself with a sympathizing friend. If press her grief inward, and to conceal i been

Very still, and therefore seemed to sleep

But the congenial warmth which she no enced had the effect of sunbeams on the flood gates of her tears, which had been I hard unkindness, altered eye,' were rathey flowed more profusely than on the fir her sorrow, for then their source had be up by horror. While with Lady Sylvester been impelled to rouse herself to repel insunity; she had be enforced into action by thof any person willing to spare her the exernow she felt helpless as a child; her energifeebled, and she sank from the momer friendly hand was held out to her support.

Cecilia finding it impossible to direct her to the future, for on that she looked with a eye of despondency, strove gradually to back to the past, hoping that the unrespondence of every feeling and of every parafford relief. Nor was she mistaken; by Mercedes to talk of herself, and to give long stifled emotions, she removed the that crushed her heart, more effectually the other means which she could have devised cedes gradually told her every thing, almost trifle that had occurred during her abser

England. Cecilia was fully convinced that it was not the contemplation of the clouded future, the loss of fortune, and the disgrace of downfal, that preyed upon her mind; but her father's death, and the falsehood of her friend and her lover. All that she related concerning Lady Sylvester and her son, all the conversations which she repeated, and the trifling occurrences which she now remembered, revealed to the clear-sighted Cecilia a thousand things before unsuspected.

"Good Heavens!" she inwardly exclaimed with lively indignation, "how is it possible that her father should have committed her to such hands?" She longed to communicate her opinions unreservedly to Mercedes, and completely to unveil the mworthiness of her former miscalled friends, and to expose all their artifices to her view, that she might thank Heaven that she was not Wentworth's wife. Perhaps Mercedes had already done so, though she refrained from any outward expressions of resentment, or censure.

Cecilia also conceived a high esteem for Lord Sylvester. She was amazed that Mercedes had not preferred him to his brother, and she indulged in not a few delightful visions of his return from the continent, being followed by an avowal of a long cherished affection for her friend. On Julian, though Mercedes forgot not to speak of him, she scarcely bestowed a thought, nor would she have deemed his passion less presumptuous than he considered it himself. Mercedes' account of his

fervent injunctions to her, to avail herself of the protection of his family, awoke a feeling of jellousy, and a fear, that if Mercedes dispatched the letter with which he had entrusted her, she shound be robbed of her friend, by those who were strange to her. But here Mercedes, with that firms which always marked her performance of whaten she conceived to be a duty; but with all that get tleness which, without weakening her decision cleared them from the imputation of harshout turned a deaf ear to Cecilia's entreaties, and compliance with her promise to Julian, transmit his letter without delay to his mother.

It was with reluctance that Mercedes thus of posed Cecilia's wishes; and a knowledge of I motives increased her affection towards her. Feing the burden of her own grief in a meas lightened, other thoughts now found a place in I mind.

"Tell me, Cecilia," she one day said to her she lay reclining on a couch, while Cecilia sat at feet, looking oftener up into her face than on open page before her, "how is it that I oknow you now; that I never happened to see y with the rest of your family?"

"Oh! because I was never with them. Wo you like me to give a sketch of my life, up to t my twentieth year, and your twentieth year a is it not, Mercedes?"

"Yes," replied Mercedes, with a sigh. "It Can I be not yet twenty? I feel so much of

h older than you. I should like a sketch of e very much, dearest Cecilia; do let me

Il then, in my childhood I did not live at ith my sisters; I was given up to my granda gift she was glad to accept, with a stipunat she was to be allowed to do just as she th me, and that ended by my being allowed st as I liked; and I liked to run very wild. y my education was entirely neglected, but espect, it suited me well. I loved to live doors under the greenwood tree, and I in it; for from a sickly infant, I grew into obust, hearty girl, with a skin dyed brown un, such as you see me now. I often think at pity that I was not the only son, the of the family. I have such a bold and spirit, not at all womanly," she said, her s flashing with fire, and full of latent misand quite thrown away as it is, I am forced al it."

nsense, dear Cecilia," replied Mercedes; enderness, at least, is feminine."

I don't think that it is; I have seen men tender—much more gentle than I ever why, I am sure that I think my father entle and tender than my mother. But ick to my history—I lived with my grand-till I was nearly fifteen, never having a stradicted, nor ever disappointed of a probleasure. I was happy enough; certainly



which was my fate when my dear gran I am not reconciled to it yet, ar shall be, I feel; but it was worse then. was uncontrollable, and so was my ten hated everything about me, and nearly eve more especially a very fine lady, my governess; and she in revenge taught the very much shocked at everything I said ar was wretched myself, and, I believe, destri comfort of every one in the house. It so to be said that I was intolerable, and son don't know who, but I think it must hav sensible person) proposed that I should be school. To school accordingly I went, ar returned home the same spring that y abroad; I never would come home for my if they were to be spent in London; and cared whether I did or not. So that is the that I never saw you; that mystery is ex

"And how did you like school?" ask

and that there existed very different opinions and feelings from my own, which I should find myself forced to consult. Perhaps, you will think that this was a knowledge which, like other school acquirements, I have lost again?"

"No, indeed; I often see your actions prove how thoroughly you have learnt it."

Cecilia seemed to listen to these words incredulously; then, shaking her head, she replied:

"You don't intend to deceive me, so I suppose that I have deceived you. No one else would say those words for me. It may be true, that hitherto I have been much disposed to comply with you; but then I love you so much," she said, the colour mounting on her cheek, and the tears springing to her eyes; "and perhaps it won't last—I don't mean my love; I mean my compliance."

"I am glad to hear that," answered Mercedes smiling; "for now you spoil me."

"If you were to ask me if things go better at home now than formerly, I should scarcely know how to answer you," continued Cecilia after a moment's thought, "I am not such a disturber of peace as I was, certainly. I choose my own path, and do not trespass on that of others. Still altercation will arise. Sometimes it seems to me that all fear, and none love me, except indeed my father." (But here Cecilia checked herself; she would not dwell on her father's love to the poor orphan). "Why hould this be? I am necessary at home, for I am

often consulted, often called on to act. I can't tell how they used to do without me, and sometimes I wish that they were forced to do so again. My sisters fall into such silly difficulties; my mother into such idle quarrels. I dare say you will think very lightly of my grievances, Mercedes; but they often make me very sick at heart," said Cecilia sorrowfully; "especially," she added in an under tone, "when they occasion self-reproach."

"Oh! dearest Cecilia," exclaimed Mercedes; "do not let them be the cause of such a feeling. Do not let these trifles, however harassing they may be, occasion so great an evil."

Mercedes was much touched at her cousin's words, and through the careless tone under which she ever strove to conceal her feelings, she plainly perceived that Cecilia was not happy, that she had not that satisfaction in her daily course of life, that alone can give peace; that in spite of her apparent disregard of the manner in which, according to her own account, she often treated those around her with contemptuous disrespect and angry impatience, a better spirit spoke within her, and

Remorse behind was telling o'er her fears, And 'neath a smiling eye, the soul was full of tears.

Cecilia saw that she was touched with pity, and anxious to soothe and counsel her; she raised herself on her knees beside her, and as she kissed her forehead, let fall a tear on it. "I am much more happy, dearest Mercedes," she said in a hurried voice, "since I have known you, and trust to be much better. You I love, admire, and esteem so much; and every day that I pass with you I feel, when I lie down at night, that I have passed it better than I should otherwise have done, and I thank Heaven for it. Since we have been here, I have been so peaceful! Only when I dwell on this thought, I feel that I am most selfishly forgetting that while you impart so much happiness to me, I can do so little for you."

"Oh! Cecilia, how can you speak thus? You can only do it to remind me how much I am indebted to you."

"For what?" interrupted Cecilia, impatiently.

"For the performance of a few of the commonest acts of humanity! You must have been prepared to despise me indeed if my conduct has had the effect of surprising you. Spare me any thanks, dear Mercedes, and if I am better than you expected, do not tell me so. It is too ambiguous a compliment to convey much pleasure."

Mercedes gave a melancholy smile, and answered:

"'If thou wilt expect, let it not be gladness.' I have been taught this truth, and one more bitter far, which is not to expect kindness even where it might be claimed; and on you—on your family, I have no claims."

These were the only words of the kind that

Cecilia had ever heard fall from the lips of M cedes. She was distressed and touched, and rep eagerly:

"There are ties of blood between us, Merce Would you call them nothing? I feel that heart beats towards you as towards a sister."

Mercedes raised herself from her couch, hastily threw her arms round Cecilia's neck.

"Oh, Cecilia!" she said, "I cannot be to you a sister. I must be up, and go forth from he and struggle with my ill-fortunes, and se subsistence. I would not have you love me a sister, for then your heart would bleed too ne for the afflictions and difficulties that I loo encounter, and which, with God's help, I hop overcome. If you regard the conflict so tend you will weep too much for me. Give me passion, dear Cecilia; let that suffice. If you me love, I shall cause you pain."

"So be it," replied Cecilia, in an earnest v "Yet will I give you love. The deepest love I can feel shall be yours, and you must not i it, for then indeed do you pierce through the l that offers it. No, Mercedes, you shall never while I live, that you have 'no healing medici your sickness,' though you may, if you so wi repel the hand that would bear it to your lips.

Mercedes, as her cousin spoke these words as she saw her dark eyes fill with a light of and benevolence, that rendered her countenan ment angelic, took her hand, (that kind which she spoke,) and pressing it tenderly s, answered:

Cecilia, I have no power to do that. I; I will yield to you."

he lay in Cecilia's arms that fondly clasped did not speak again; her eyes were closed; ngth was exhausted; at last she moved and murmured in a low voice, but her re quite audible to her companion's ear: lia, I will never again say that I am poor s. I have you on earth, and God in

this she fell asleep, and Cecilia ventured rithdraw suddenly the support which she her. As she continued kneeling there, reedes' head reclining on her shoulder, a bright, consolatory, and generous, pointing ans of relieving her from future cares and s, of placing her in the secure enjoyment t was necessary to the peacefulness of her ng up in Cecilia's heart; a heavenly sugand one received and entertained with a some. But the joy with which she hailed imped by the after recollection that it must before she could carry it into execution.

Now you must put me in your heart for friend.

I must commune with your grief.

Or you deny me right.

SHAKSPEA

By this conversation, the cousins were than ever endeared to each other. Mer thought with much grief of the secret source uneasiness of which Cecilia had revealed to be existence which were, in their onward or undermining her domestic happiness, and carank weeds to spring up in a soil well adapte the growth of the finest fruits. Gratitude affection filled her with an earnest desire to minister some judicious counsel to her frien the future guidance of her conduct, before slatured to the scene of trial; but Mercedes tated, for she was little accustomed to advise, naturally indisposed to do so. Her example, ever probably effected more than precent

ester, 'resolved and re-resolved,' in her far inerior trials, to emulate the same spirit. During
the period of delightful repose which they enjoyed
together, before, as autumn drew on, they should
be forced to rejoin the rest of the family, she flattered herself with the idea that she gained some
portion of that self-command which she so much
reverenced, and began to feel almost eager to display her newly acquired strength to others, and to
test it herself.

Alas! it did not stand the trial so well as she had anticipated, or as Mercedes had hoped. Many serious annovances arose gradually, and Cecilia's patience gave way before them. She pleaded in self-justification to her upbraiding conscience, awakened to remorse by the mildly rebuking language of Mercedes' eve, that, had the wrongs which she resented with indignant vehemence, been inflicted only on herself, she could have endured, or, 25 she was more inclined to express it, despised them. But when she perceived that the asylum which the unhappy orphan so greatly needed was grudgingly yielded by her nearest relatives; that a thousand petty slights, and remarks, indelicately made, when not unkindly designed, were suffered daily to remind her of her altered fortunes; and when she began to fear that these would not be the only means employed to separate her friend from her, her indignation was no longer to be restrained. Her hasty expression of it, far from doing any good, only rendered Mrs. Johnson more than ever averse to allow of Mercedes' presence: her father was also disposed to desire the removal of a cause of daily provocation, and her sisters were not inclined to submit to the aggravated ill humour which their mother displayed. Fortunately for Mercedes' peace, the son whom Mrs. Johnson was so desirous to guard from danger was, for some time after her admission into the family, absent from home. During the sporting season he went into a distant county; but his first remarks on his return were fatally alarming. His mother heard him observe to Cecilia that Mercedes was now almost as handsome as ever. This speech was sufficient to awaken all her maternal solicitude, and the next day she sought Mercedes in her chamber, to guard by prompt measures against impending danger. When there, having provided against the chance of interruption by sending Cecilia to execute some commissions for her, that could not hastly be accomplished, she commenced a discourse which, with some circumlocution, conveyed her real meaning very clearly to her listener.

Mrs. Johnson was first at the pains to ascertain that Mercedes was as well convinced of the imperievable loss of her fortune as she was herself; and she then proceeded to make it seen and felt by the destitute orphan, that it would be more fitting for her to make such exertions in her own behalf as should ensure the means of existence, than to be supported in idleness by those on

e charity she had not sufficient claim to ud such a provision.

e was quite willing, she declared, and had enough to show that she was so, to allow edes to remain under her roof as long as she to other shelter; but she could not conceive with the grand education that she had rel, and the sums of money that had been ed on it, (far greater than any that her sters had ever cost her, though perhaps their asions to have it expended on them had been ), she should now be destitute of resources in if qualifying her to enter on a situation might afford her a comfortable home, and the remuneration of her services might a fund for future years.

I that Mrs. Johnson said, in which there was ant of wisdom, though some of kindness and osity, had already passed through Mercedes' mind, and she listened to it now without imnee or resentment. She strove not to weep, see she did not wish it to be inferred that her sprang from wounded pride or disappoint. She never had rested any hopes on the bility that Mrs. Johnson would long pursue an site line of conduct; she was, therefore, able aintain a sufficient composure to thank her for dvice, and adding with quiet dignity that she dready contemplated the mode of proceeding a she recommended, and would now consider ther without delay, had the satisfaction of



cedes sought to calm her mind, which ha considerably disturbed by Mrs. Johnson's address; for though she had declared with that she had already planned the execution that was now suggested to her, she had no templated the necessity of immediate execu a design which she had hitherto striven i to reduce to any thing that appeared prac The debility of mind and body of which s still painfully sensible, had made her timid for a continuance of repose, until her s should be more re-established. the only means by which she could enjoy it to be withdrawn, she cast a momentary around her, as if to realise her utter frien (she had never received any communicatio Mrs. Wilmot in reply to Julian's letter), an strove to vanquish the dismay which the s it inspired, and to arm herself to 'serve and natiently.

spent at home, the company of his playful child was a sufficient relaxation to his fatigued spirits. Motives of vanity and ambitious designs led him to object strongly to allow any great intimacy to Fring up between Mercedes and any of her own thatives, for he began to look on to a time when he should be elevated far above them. Thus her in childhood and early youth was almost solimy; but she was of a gay disposition, easily soused, and had an aptness to learn, and a love of polication, which rendered the often irksome and full routine of education replete to her with interest nd pleasure. Masters of all kinds were at her summand, and owing to the talents with which nature had gifted her, she profited more by their estructions than nine out of ten of their pupils smally do. But with the volatility of uncurbed buth, she had turned from one favourite occupaion to another, acquiring little proficiency in any; then displaying talent, but never attaining excelence. And now, when she came to examine heron those things with which she thought verself best acquainted, she was dismayed to find www superficial was her knowledge, how unmehodical had been her studies, and how imperfect were her acquirements. She covered her face with and wept most bitterly. The further the continued her reflections, the more convinced the became of her incapacity to carry into executon the plan which she had eagerly formed of immediately seeking the situation of a governess, and



from a subordinate governess in a private still more from a teacher in a school, she was fully convinced that her present feeble hea tirely incapacitated her for undertaking the placed as effectual a bar between herself an inferior situations, as the ignorance which deeply deplored did with respect to higher o

The result of all these painful cogitation that poor Mercedes descended to the dinn that day with eyes so red and swollen with wand cheeks so pale, that Frederick's rem soon as he was alone with his sisters, was was a thousand pities that so pretty a girl have so deploringly fallen off, and that she we very silly to cry away all her beauty just had lost all her fortune; for her face, suc used to be, might easily have won her a Cecilia, who had been on the point of for Mercedes to learn the cause of her increase

had in some measure corroborated the truth Rose remembered that her songs a few is before had been listened to with cold ince by one who had often lavished the it praise on them, and had secretly dethe cause of his insensibility in the gaze of hich she had seen him cast on her drooping

Some similar remembrance rankled in ret's bosom, and Mrs. Johnson, inwardly it of her late proceedings, and incensed with les for having told the tale of her cruelty so, resented as a personal affront any thing her praise. It was not until a sharp alterhad taken place that Cecilia had the wisdom hdraw, and she sought her cousin with a temper, and much discomposure of mind.

#### CHAPTER VI.

Di memoria e di speme il cor pascendo.

There is that within us, heavenly sown, That gladdeneth in afflictions, and doth find Sweetness in sorrow.

THOUGHTS IN PAST YEARS.

No sooner had Mercedes returned to her chan ber, than in eager pursuance of a thought that he awakened hope, she sought a large portfolio which her trembling hand could scarcely raise, and oper ing it, began to spread out its contents before be They consisted of all the sketches which she made in Rome, almost all begun and complete under the directions (oh! how readily accorder of Julian. When they again met her eye they cited a feeling of approval beyond what she is expected them to call forth, and the remen brance of the many encomiums, which had be lavished on them, though she had ever been f from yielding implicit credence to them, afford some additional support to her own conviction, the they were not wholly without value. An idea b occurred to her that her proficiency in this art (# greatest of which she could boast) might become the means of acquiring that independence to which

: aspired. These thoughts naturally recalled fan to her mind, and she said to herself as she med over the leaves:

Ah! were my kind adviser here, who could be be able to assist me with counsel, who more dy to exert himself in my behalf?"

As she pursued this train of meditation, she bene aware that if Wentworth had been connected the every thing gay and hopeful in her life, yet it a Julian's image that recurred to her as assoted with all hours of mental pleasure, and all e higher enjoyments of taste and feeling which to had known.

As she continued to collect her scattered drawgs, and recalled as she gazed on them a thousand tty circumstances that had marked the delightful rurs thus employed, the exquisite pleasure with hich they had been done, and the future enjoyent which she had anticipated when she should low them to her father,—all these rememmes called forth bursts of tears from Mercedes' s; and relinquishing her sad occupation, she aced her arm on the table, and laying her head wn on it, wept without control. While thus aployed, she heard a quick step approach her or, and a hasty knock for admission. Knowing d who it was, she immediately unclosed it, and ecilia entered. One quick glance at Mercedes' e, and another at the table at which she had occupied, seemed to tell her all that had been using in her friend's mind. Hastily closing the



Dearest Ocema, replied Mercedes, Kis tenderly, and drawing her towards a sea must not speak thus. You know that it sary for us to part-that I never could think of remaining here long. Oh! how I am for the shelter afforded me for many past! If, as yet I have done nothing to se independence, to earn my subsistence, I m in excuse how much I have suffered in heal now I am better, much better, dearest, c your kindness and care. My inaction mu I am quite aware that the time: when it ought to cease; when desire of ea be succeeded by active exertion. rection shall that take? Here would I gl for counsel; but to you I must not, canno for it, if you listen to me with feelings of 1 anger, which it is most blameable to indu which I deem wholly uncalled for. If you be to me that friend that you might be, th have sown seeds of contention in its

tearful earnestness with which Mercedes the seriousness of her manner silenced her ous friend, if it did not change her mood. lowed her hand to remain for awhile in that reedes; then suddenly withdrawing it, she

believe this is no fitting home for you, and e right to go."

h, Cecilia!" replied Mercedes, reproachfully, ou imagine that I shall leave you without

ut you say that you must go, and I cannot dict you."

ilia felt that she could not combat what des proceeded to advance, and she resolved ose a restraint upon herself, and carefully to I from her friend the lurking feelings of reent that lay in her bosom, and to appear to without impatience any efforts she should to carry her purpose into effect. Nor could erceive any feasible mode of preventing the ion of it. If she were to make an appeal to her, she believed that she possessed influence with him to obtain what she should ask. 'ed Cecilia more than any of his children; eliness and quickness of comprehension renher able both to amuse and to assist him. ssed in affairs of importance, he would not any request that she should make him about

Mercedes worthy of serious consideration what avail was it to obtain his authority her cousin a home, if that home were not abode of peace? Cecilia, therefore, rese delay her appeal to him until the time an putting into execution a plan she fondly cher an object which she had in view-on would restore Mercedes, if not to former a at least to comfort and independence. It v Cecilia's grandmother had on her death le sum of money entirely at her own comm come into her possession as soon as she was and Cecilia had been informed by her fathe would by that time amount to £5,000. also told her that this gift would not preve from providing for her exactly the same as for his other daughters; and the generous from the time that she had learnt to pity love Mercedes, and had become acquainted extent of her misfortunes, resolved that twenty-first birthday she would make it t piest day of her life, by presenting to her cousin the little fortune which would then her own, and be herself content with the which she should receive from her father.

It must be confessed that the ecstasy of j which she contemplated the fulfilment favourite design was considerably damped givings and fears of the obstacles she migh with in its accomplishment. She began that the independence which she looked for ould by no means be so complete as r to act without obtaining the full confather at least, to her intentions. She cipate any very serious opposition from he were influenced by others, for she to be generous and liberal; and her eared to her so rational, that she could that any, but the most mercenary of ld regard it with disapprobation.

atest difficulty that she expected to was with regard to Mercedes herself; r that she would combat the design, and saps defeat it, convincing her of the f keeping her still in ignorance of d her to the pain of beholding her y cares for the future, and of witpreparations for departure. her, that it would have been most she had possessed another friend have received her for the few months t elapse before the eventful day, the which she so longed to hasten; and to regret that silence on the part of ot which, at first, had given her satishe therefore proposed to Mercedes to her inquiries in that quarter, t to her how impossible it was that ot should disregard a letter written by en supposing that her feelings had cooled ne when she thought it not too great a friendship and gratitude to quit the er family, and her native land, to attend



my oping and exercence real England; the living was in the hands of a s who could afford no information with rethe widow, except that he believed that left England shortly after the death of her l This led them to suppose that she had ic Thus all their hopes were defeated point, and Cecilia was forced to assist Me earnest, in seeking to execute such plan peared most practicable. After much consi they had both of them come to the conclus it was on her skill in drawing that she sho rest her hopes of profit; and she one day 1 to Cecilia to take some copies, which employed herself in making from the which she had done abroad, and of which versal interest of the subjects would, she give a claim to popular notice, to a print which, during the days of her affluence, heen well known. She had since her ret 

s opinion was to be esteemed, she asked him her candidly what value he should set on her ions, and how she could best make them le.

man heard her inquiries with respectful ss, and inspected with care the specimens of tfolio which she had brought him. One of e seemed to regard with increased interest riosity mingled with surprise. He paused so long, that Cecilia could not refrain from him hastily, why he remarked it more than t. He looked up as she spoke, and replied ome deliberation:

should not like to excite Miss Ratcliffe's in any way that might lead to disappoint-but I can show you a drawing here for I received twenty pounds this morning, alfac-simile of this, in style and conception; should really say, there is not a very wide nee in execution. For," he said, turning reedes, "Miss Ratcliffe must be aware that is much inequality in these sketches, and it hesitation, I may pronounce this the

h! Mercedes," exclaimed Cecilia, who had up the drawing, "I am sure that in this ze you have put in the original sketch, inof your copy; for I remember this date was n the first."

rcedes, as she looked, assented; and re-

membered well that the drawing had been executed under the superintendence of Julian, and even owed some touches to his hand.

"But these things, I need not tell you," continued the printseller; "do not depend solely on merit. An established reputation of course ensures a sale for many trifles, which, without a name, would pass unnoticed. But I will show you the drawing to which I allude."

Mercedes, pale, and trembling with a vague anticipation that sprang up in her mind, advanced with trepidation to see whose could be the drawing which so closely resembled her own. One glance sufficed to inform her, and she sank again into her seat; while Cecilia, in her eager curiosity to solve this mystery, did not observe her distress, but bending over the drawing, and reading the initals, J. W. on a corner of it, inquired hastily the painter's name.

"Wilmot, Madam," was the reply. "He will have some pictures in the exhibition this year, and has excited great expectations of their excellence, from the admiration that was bestowed on one which he sent last spring from Italy. This is the more remarkable, as he is only one and twenty."

"Is he in London? Where does he live?" continued Cecilia with increasing eagerness.

"I can give you his address, if you please, Madam," said the man, arand he went to seek it.

Cecilia now turned to Mercedes.

"Calm yourself, dearest : she whispered; "this

is surely your friend; and he could not have been found more opportunely."

The man returned with Wilmot's card, saying:
"Mr. Wilmot may not be in town; I have
not heard of his arrival, but here you can learn of
him."

Cecilia hastily thanked him, and then thinking that her conduct might perhaps appear strange enough to call for some explanation, moved to a little distance from Mercedes, and in a low voice said:

"This painter, Mr. Shepherd, was sent out to Italy to pursue his studies by Miss Ratcliffe's father. Most painful remembrances are therefore awakened in her by this unexpected recognition of him here. As for the similarity of the drawings, that is easily accounted for, by the fact that he was her latest instructor."

Having said this, Cecilia returned to her friend, and proposed to depart. Mercedes rose and followed her in silence; the moment that Cecilia was seated in the carriage, she gave the servant Julian's direction. Then, as the door closed, she turned to Mercedes, and said:

"I have done right, have I not? You would like to see him without delay?"

"Yes, indeed," replied Mercedes, speaking with much emotion. "I have no doubt that I shall find in him a faithful friend. Oh! Cecilia," she added, after a short pause, taking her hand, and grasping it earnestly as she spoke, while her tears

gushed forth abundantly. "You cannot imagine the joy it will be to me, again to see one whethinks of my father with nothing but love an gratitude!"

Poor Mercedes!

She had had wounds, and some that could not heal.

The consciousness of the blot on her father memory was one of these.

# CHAPTER VII.

Sighs unquiet, and the sickly pang Of a half dead, yet still undying hope.

COLERIDGE.

Quanti principi grandi, amati e cari,
Insieme con la vita han perso il nome!
Quanti poi vivon gloriosi e chiari,
Poveri nati, sol perchè le chiome
Di sacri lauri, alteri doni e rari,
S'ornarono felici; ed ora, come
Chiare stelle nel ciel splendor beati;
Mentre il mondo starà, sempre onorati!

In the painter's studio were seated Julian and his mother; he was at his easel, and she was a little removed from him, at a small work-table at which she was not less busily employed. In person, Mrs. Wilmot greatly resembled her son. She possessed the same clear grey eye, that spoke as plainly, in its liquid light, of lively sensibility as of intellectual power; the same expression of countenance, at once gentle yet dignified—at once mournful yet serene. She was deeply engaged in thought, of which Julian appeared to be the subject, for the widow often raised her face from her employment, and gazed on him with an air of

compassionate sorrow. Her son too not unfr quently directed his looks towards her, and if the eyes met, there would be such a sudden gush tenderness in their glance, such a light of love, dispelled the gloom that overcast their brows.

Julian however did not often look up from he painting, and sometimes when he did, and me his mother's gaze, withdrew his eyes as it averse to encounter it. The whole air of the young painter was very sad; the paleness that overspread his countenance was rendered more striking by the mourning which he wore for his father, and the very mode in which he handled the implements of his beloved art, confessed the deep dejection of his mind. At length the silence was broken by Mrs. Wilmot, who said with a smile, that we mournful in spite of herself:

"Well, Julian, I think that we must scarcely permit ourselves to regret that Mercedes does not need our aid."

Julian started; then after a moment's pause, is replied briefly:

"To do so were indeed unreasonable, for the home of a wealthy banker will afford her all those comforts and luxuries with which we are unprovided and to which she is accustomed."

"But why do you always speak as if you deemed luxury so indispensable to her? Is this merely because she was brought up in its lap, of from your knowledge of her character?"

"Chiefly for the first reason," replied Julian

hastily; "besides," he added, "she is so well suited to adorn the highest station."

"And yet, Julian," said his mother drawing near, and placing her hand tenderly on his arm as she spoke; "I had begun to indulge a hope, that when the inequality of your fortunes was removed, the greatest obstacle of your wishes would be removed also: that when she lost that equivocal and delusive position which her father had obtained for her, she might, not altogether unwillingly—without repining, descend to a lower sphere, and there find a permanent and unpretending happiness, more real, and more congenial to her own heart, than were the gaudy pleasures she is called on to resign."

Julian offered no reply to his mother's words, to which he did not listen without agitation; she therefore continued:

"Believe me, that were this the case, whatever the strength of early habits, were they even more confirmed than her age can allow hers to be, the home that your love might prepare could more than compensate for the one she has lost. Do not suppose, dear Julian, but that your letters, however unintentionally, betrayed to me long before your lips revealed it, the sentiment which Miss Ratcliffe inspired; nor was I ignorant that it proved a fresh incitement to your aspirations after fame. I perceived that the ardour which it excited might smooth the road to success, and reader every difficulty superable; but I saw not that the attainment of the greatest height in the

path on which you had entered would bring y nearer the object of your love. But now—"

"Mother," interrupted Julian, "I see that v have never read me aright. Such was as lit my expectation as yours. The hopes which y attribute to me were never entertained; and the fore cannot be replaced by such as you would i plant. Mercedes more than ever needs the pall gifts of fortune, and it is as little as ever in r power to bestow them upon her. Therefore t change in her situation has but cast an addition obstacle in the way. From the day that I first se her, my earliest resolution was, (and is not now! be relinquished,) that never until my love a confer distinction shall it be avowed. All m desire was, and is, for the arrival of that time whe she shall triumph in knowing herself to have bee its sole object; all my ambition, that if m name descends, as it may descend, (unless deal renders my course too brief,) to posterity on the rolls of fame, hers may be embalmed with m memory: that I may give her a place among the women rendered illustrious—not by the virtues the beauties that made them beloved-for the fir might have passed unrecognized by a world n worthy of them, and the latter might have perish like the flowers of the field; but by the devotion those who loved them. Such is the wish of my hear and it is attainable!

" Meantime, I have not desired, certainly I have not sought, to win her heart away from those whose

had present wealth and rank to bestow. It not striven to teach her to despise vulgar tness, and to see in me one whom

Nature at my happy birth Blest in her bounty with the richest dower That Heaven indulges to a child of earth.\*

splayed not to her eyes the more lasting boon, th I feel will one day be mine to confer. I told not of a glory that should one day shine forth check 'the frown of supercilious brows,' and dignity to the choice which would now be ned ignoble. And yet I might have told her hese things. Auguries of success are discernito other eyes than mine. The palm of genius been awarded me, and future fame has been aised by lips that, in promising, almost beit. You will deem that I grow vain-glos. mother." said Julian with a smile that aed half in derision of his own enthusiasm. ink not so. I have, it is true, (and why confrom you one emotion of this throbbing heart?) imes a deep conviction that success is at my mand,—that I have that within me before th difficulties shall disappear. This, mother, is thought that I treasure up in my own heart; cret that the future shall reveal; for the present, a hope that makes all labour light, and every ning of success inestimably precious."

lis mother was much affected by his ear-

<sup>\*</sup> Southey.

"And in order to carry out this vision scheme, will you refuse to possess yourself of treasure that is the object of it, by any ot means? Will you seek to grasp the shad when the substance is within your reach?"

"How within my reach?" asked Julian impaously. "Shall I go and seek her in the home her wealthy relatives where she is still in a enjoyment of every advantage that she former possessed? They, perhaps, might be not us willing to yield her to me; but never shall I be found willing to declare a love, that it would cost her a sacrifice to reward. Besides, do yo not suppose that of the numbers that followe her, when her star shone brightly, there are som who will find her now, though its light be part obscured by clouds? Do you not believe, the though Wentworth were false, as I ever knew hir to be, some will prove true?"

As they were thus conversing, they were in terrupted by the entrance of the maid, wh thrust a card into Julian's hand, saying as sk did so:

"The ladies that wrote it wait down below there is any answer."

Julian, taking the scrap of paper, carelessly so his own direction on it, and muttering, "some troublesome visitor, I suppose," turned to the other side. The words that met his eye were "Miss Ratcliffe wishes to see Mr. Wilmot, if I should be disengaged." Starting up, he put the card into his mother's hand, and disappeared.

## CHAPTER VIII.

My thoughts are deeply stirred, for they oft fain Would wait on thee; by thee unnoted, yet Like unseen angels that would do thee good; Have tended on thee, though to all untold, Nor deemed of, and by thee the least of all.

THOUGHTS IN PAST YEARS.

Gli occhi dolenti per pietà del core Hanno di lagrimar sofferta pena. Ora s' io voglio sfogar il dolore, Che a poco a poco alla morte mena, Convienmi di parlar traendo guai.

DANTE.

JULIAN speedily returned to his mother, and leading Mercedes, who accompanied him, towards her, placed the hand he held in Mrs. Wilmot's. The unfortunate girl sank upon a seat beside her, and for some time the silence was unbroken save by her sobs. After the lapse of a few minutes, Julian, unable to restrain his emotion, exclaimed vehemently:

"For God's sake speak to her, console her—tell her you will be her mother!"

Mrs. Wilmot obeyed this injunction by drawing nearer to the poor orphan, and folding her tenderly in her arms; she drew back the heavy veil that concealed her from her sight, and impressed a kiss on her forehead, saying:

"Why have we not heard of you sooner, no

Mercedes hesitated to reply; and then said, no upbraidingly, but timidly, glancing at the widow's garb:

- "I thought your own grief had banished me from your mind."
- "Why did you think that anything would make us forgetful of you?"
- "I thought so," replied Mercedes, "because me answer came to the letter I sent."
- "No letter has ever reached us; we have anxiously desired to obtain tidings of you; and since our arrival in London have succeeded in doing so. Another day would not have passed without our seeking you, dear Mercedes, in your present home."

Mercedes, re-assured by the tenderness of Mrs. Wilmot's manner, now spoke without reserve, and hurriedly gave expression to the thoughts that were uppermost in her mind.

"I have very lately," she said, "learned that you also had been afflicted. I thought that your silence was accounted for; but when I heard that Mr. Wilmot was here, and remembered the last words from him, the promise which he asked and obtained, I could not be content not to seek him and to inquire of you. I fancied that I should see you here, but I did not come without reluctance. I have found you," she continued, turning to Julian, "at a time when most in need

idvice, perhaps assistance, and I do not d to ask it. You talk of my present wish to quit it—speedily. I cannot have I must go forth and labour. I seek the f subsistence. You, Mr. Wilmot, may r my drawings, and how you used to comd to hear them commended. I think—I it your praises at least were sincere. ink that I can in any way avail myself of f those I mean that I did when you n me? Can I do others? Can I instruct or in any way turn this accomplishment, alone I can venture to believe that I in sure surpass mediocrity, to account? I ught of other means of profit, and in vain. yet too weak, too incompetent to undertake ter change. The time may come—I will bring it near—when I may be qualified re."

oke these words rapidly, for her agitation t, though she struggled for composure; paused for breath.

and his mother were at first too much to reply; at length the latter took her d said gently:

not, dear child, speak thus anxiously. You se so destitute of friends as to allow of an re call for exertions to which you are as ual. Quiet and repose are, I see, plainly o you."

mistake my situation, indeed," replied



remain mactive. Exertion will oring ar fatigue, and rest may be sweet, but quiet an pose are denied me."

Mrs. Wilmot made no reply to these v she knew not how to combat them. After a silence she said:

- "You must at least be patient, and do no without consideration."
- "I have been patient," interrupted Mer and I have already given much time to constion."
- "Well," continued Mrs. Wilmot, "Juliar I will come to see you, and we will consu gether. You shall tell us all you have done we will consider what to do next. You make your friend known to me, that I may her for her care of one whom I reg from her birth as my younger child. You promise me, Mercedes, to remember how bound to you by the last words that passed

tears followed each other slowly down her teak. At last she said:

r friend is here; she waits for me. She is sin."

ould you like her to come to you?" said "Why should our acquaintance r be delayed? You must not forget, Merhat though she may be your most familiar, the oldest friend you have in the world. ), Julian, and bring Miss Johnson here." n complied; and when Cecilia came, Merecame more calm, and gradually recovered aposure. The sweet voice and countenance . Wilmot, and the grateful cordiality with she met her prepossessed Cecilia greatly favour. In a few minutes she began to feel Mercedes must leave her, the pain of partald be greatly alleviated by the idea of her to Mrs. Wilmot, a prospect which she saw she had a right to contemplate. She t had they been alone, she could even now pened her whole heart to her, and was conthat all her designs would have won her ating approbation. She related all that had d at the print-shop, which had led to their The explanation of ry of Mr. Wilmot. Vilmot's conduct was this. Constrained to ar former dwelling on the death of her hushe had immediately formed the design which 1 carried into execution of joining her son on tinent, believing it to be of importance that



ears, unto see sought min on ner arrival in L. Shocked and grieved beyond expression at the rible details which she then received, she a sought for further information with regard orphan child. All that she could learn was, the was returning to England with Lady Sylvesi

Having in Julian's latest letters received count of the projected union between he Wentworth, she felt no dread that Mercedes find herself friendless or destitute. With a aching with her own sorrows, and though full for the afflicted daughter, but little fearful th aggravation of distress awaited her, she left land to meet her son. When with Julia communicated to her all that he had learned Lord Sylvester of the conduct of those to Mercedes had been entrusted by her father. knowledge awoke not only indignation at wh passed, but serious misgivings with regard comfort of her journey homewards, and

r, she would take shelter with them; and Mrs. Ilmot, now from daily observation made well we how utterly her son's peace was destroyed his hitherto hopeless passion, had ventured to ulge in pleasing visions that represented her a child and the child of their regretted benefactor, wered to happiness, and mutually depending on hother for its continuance.

The situation in which they found Mercedes ned to destroy the fabric she had raised. language which she heard from Mercedes' lips, which far from being contradicted by her sin, was in fact corroborated by silence, and etimes by reluctant consent, entirely changed aspect which things had worn before she had 1 her unexpected visitors. Former hopes and mes sprang again to life, and no sooner were cousins departed, than her wish was to try waken similar ones in Julian. It caused her e astonishment to see her son, after Mers' departure, instead of placing himself beside to discuss with her what could best and most lily be done for the orphan who had appealed them—what could be effected in aid of her rts, or to obviate the necessity for them—return is easel, and continue to paint with apparently bated industry. She watched him without mpting to draw him into conversation, until should manifest such a desire himself, but she d not resume her former tranquillity. At length rose quietly, and came and stood beside him thing his progress.



moned up before it visionary forms where was now striving to delineate. Mrs. I thought that the manner in which the ver of the poem recalled Mercedes to his min possibly enhanced the charm which it posses him. She certainly was not mistaken in but that in the angelic female figure, which we most remarkable part of the composition, a in this stage of it;

Gentlest of sky-born forms, and most adore she could easily trace his vivid remembra the charms of her he loved. Julian was convinced that

> Mercy had, could Mercy's self be seen, No sweeter look,\*

and it was by recalling Mercedes' beauty fancy's eye that he had striven to give life idea which he wished to express; to repres conception he had formed of resent he was occupied in representing her in act which the poet thus describes:

Thy form, from out thy sweet abode
O'ertook him on his blasted road,
And stopped his wheels, and looked his rage away.
I see recoil his sable steeds

That bore him swift to savage deeds; Thy tender melting eyes they own.

His mother, as she bent over him, and gazed in wader on the progress which he had made, said a low voice of delight,

"How beautiful!"

Julian looked up, his eyes beaming with pleare, and exclaimed in reply to what he believed be her meaning:

"Is she not? Did you ever see so heavenly a mtenance? Did you ever hear so sweet, so intive a voice? What mild resignation united what tender sensibility!"

"Ah, Julian," interrupted his mother, with a ntle smile, "I was looking at your picture, but will gladly talk of Mercedes instead."

Julian coloured, and his mother relieved his emmassment by adding:

"I have been wishing to do so ever since she left room. Have you no plan to suggest by which could relieve her from all present care at least?" "Yes," replied Julian, "I have. I was just out to tell you of an arrangement which I have ned in my thoughts until it appears practicable. I know that yesterday you lamented that we know that house for so long a period, as it is cely large or commodious enough to suit my



be merely imaginary. During the hours we devote to labour, I am not a very entercompanion, you must allow; and it would be inconvenient to me to receive the many whom I hope soon to have, here, even if Miscliffe did not reside with you, and quite impif she does. So to-morrow you can propose to come hither; and you must make her mother, that you will be alone. She will the haps accede more willingly to your request.'

"Nay," interrupted his mother, somewh appointed and displeased at this arrangeme she do not object to your banishment, I s less disposed to love her than I am now."

"Mother," replied Julian, seriously, "you spare me all such words as these if you kno much they pain me. Do not frustrate you to do good by the pursuit of visionary so which are not capable of being realised. I

## CHAPTER IX.

Peace is nigh.

. . . . . . . . . . . Eve following eve,

Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense of home
Is sweetest; moments for their own sake hailed,
And more desired, more precious for thy song.

In silence listening, like a devout child,
My soul lay passive.

COLERIDGE.

THE following day Mrs. Wilmot and Julian, according to their promise and their own earnest desire, sought Mercedes. We need not with how much joy and gratitude their proposals were heard, nor how readily they were complied with. Mrs. Johnson, as soon as she comprehended the purpose of Mrs. Wilmot's visit, informed Meredes that she had really, on her account, for some e delayed her departure from London, and that strongly recommended her to profit by Mrs. Wilmot's invitation, as while in her house she would be able to prosecute without interruption the inquiries she was making for some situation that might suit her. She hinted also that they night long prove unsuccessful if Mercedes remained vite so difficult to please with regard to one as at present. Mercedes listened with tears of which she did not declare the source, but left it to those who saw them fall to discover whether they were wrung from her by the ill-concealed harshness of these and similar speeches,—or whether they were effusions of gratitude for acknowledged favours, or solely of regret on parting from her true friend, Cecilia. We will say for Mercedes that they were neither the tears of wounded pride, nor of resentfal indignation.

The orphan went forth from the home of her kindred, and entered that which was offered by friends, bound to her by no ties of blood, but who nevertheless bestowed all the affection of a mother Soothed and cheered by their tenand a brother. derness, and enjoying far more undisturbed peace than Cecilia had ever been able to procure for be, in a family where she received no hearty welcome, or than her impetuous temper, had no other cause of agitation existed, would have allowed Mercedes to know, she rallied more rapidly than she had ever doss She became daily more like her forms hitherto. The society of Julian had always been most congenial to her taste, nor did she find that of bis mother less so, and Mercedes was peculiarly sensible of the charms of social intercourse with those whose minds and characters were in unison with her own From such communion her nature was capable d deriving the most lively pleasure. Her feelings were acutely sensitive, her imagination easily excited; she needed sympathy; she could not rest self; an interchange of thought and feelnecessary to her happiness. She had that
f egotism, if we must so call it, which
distinguishes with approbation from that
unsparingly condemns; the yearnings of
in its deep earnestness, 'which impels us
unicate our feelings to others; but not that
which would reduce the feelings of others
ntity with our own.' In Mrs. Wilmot she
a ready and affectionate listener; in Jufound more: she found one who anticir thoughts, and who shared with her the

teach to others' bosoms what so charmed so own.

projects which had lately so much occupied s' were now, though not openly discertainly almost forgotten; and if they her to mind, they only led Mercedes to ith increased industry to those studies forded her delight in themselves, and which inued to regard as preparatory to the future ishment of the designs which she had To the prosecution of these plans, while reto such means as this, Mrs. Wilmot offered sition, for all Mercedes' endeavours at selfment were superintended by Julian. The s which he passed with them were often to an examination of the progress of the ich infused fresh spirit into the exertions of t; and in this constant, but quiet occupation, Mrs. Wilmot discerned a source of I pleasure for her young charge.

Mrs. Johnson, though freed from the ment which she had said that Mercedes a way, did not immediately leave Lond cilia had therefore still the power of enj society of her friend, for her visits merglad a welcome from Mrs. Wilmot as cousin; and she rarely past a day without o see them. One day when alone with as Mrs. Wilmot usually permitted her delicately refraining from imposing any refrain

"Mercedes, do you know I have b more unhappy since you left us, than I before in all my life?"

Her large eyes were filled with tears as and she would not raise her hand to be away, because she feigned that she did that they were there.

"Why, so?" replied Mercedes, thra arms round her tenderly; "tell me why

"I will, as nearly as I can; I think tell the cause. Before I knew you, I new of sympathy," continued Cecilia, forcing to smile. "I

Never hoped on earth to find
A mirror in an answering mind!
I had passed childhood alone. I was us

In long solitary walks, to ask questions which, would not answer them myself, must be left unanted; and therefore when I came home, and d myself lonely still, it was nothing new or ige. I remained silent, but it was without ishment or pain. But now it is quite different. came, and you beguiled me of my silence. led me to speak my thoughts—to compare with your own; to give expression to my gs, instead of 'crushing them inward,' and I can't contain them, though I try. If I ss and check one, another escapes meanwhile. always falling into difficulties and incurring

I really am unhappy. Can you tell me to be less so?"

nere was a mixture of playfulness in the seriss with which Cecilia spoke, but it could not from Mercedes that her words expressed no than the truth; not an exaggerated statement but simply what she felt and what she suf-

. After she was gone, Mercedes repeated her l's words, or at least, the substance of them to Wilmot, asking her what efficacious remedy puld propose. Mrs. Wilmot's compassion was adily awakened as her own.

Fell her," she said, "to come to you as much e can. I think your society is the best solace repetty troubles that she can find; and that friendship will be of real value to her."

is advice was agreeable to the feelings of he friends, and Cecilia readily complied with it.

L. II.

As Cecilia's love for Mercedes grew daily in strength, the more earnestly and fondly did she meditate on her project for restoring her to ease and comfort. But greatly did she dread the opposition which she anticipated from her, and most sincerely did she desire to be her benefactress in secret. She felt, moreover, that half the sweetness of her friendship with Mercedes would be destroyed, if there existed between them the oppressive knowledge of this benefit. Nothing was so repugnant to Cecilia as the receiving thanks for any kindness conferred. She always silenced them with haste; sometimes very abruptly—almost ungently. She heartly desired to forget her favours.

"Love me," she would say to Mercedes; "love me as much as you will, the more the better; but it must not be as a species of payment for favours received. Though we are of a commercial stock. do not let us trade in friendship. Love me, dearest, but it must not be because one day I gave you that present, and another did you this favour. It must be founded on a sort of abstract notion of my character; a confirmed idea, if you will, that I would give you whatever I had to give, would do for you whatever it lay in my power to do, at any cost. But it must not rest on a minute recollection of trifles, which you please to call obligations: and which, if thus heaped together, will have no effect but that of building up a wall between vou and me; a wall of separation, Mercedes!"

"Nay," replied Mercedes; "say rather they will form a chain of indissoluble union!"

"My dear Mercedes, can you really propose to me to bear a chain? Think how cruel an infliction that would be! Nor do you look as if you could support a very heavy one," answered Cecilia, with a laugh; and after this conversation she became more than ever anxious to fall on some method of accomplishing her design, and yet receive no thanks for it.

At length Cecilia's family left London; but she residetained there. Her father had a severe attack fillness, and he desired to keep her as his nurse.

His fondness for her rendered her attendance him peculiarly agreeable to him; and confined his sick chamber, he exacted so much of it, at she had little time to seek Mercedes.

#### CHAPTER X.

Most generous, and free from all contriving.

During her attendance on her father, Cecilia always past the morning with him in his library, where, though still suffering from illness, he transacted much business. He found her presence no interruption to him, nor desired her to withdraw as his visitors came and departed. Among them one day was Maxwell, formerly Mr. Ratcliffe's clerk. In the course of their conversation, Cecilia heard what had before reached her ears, that never was ruin more complete than that which had overtaken Mr. Ratcliffe; and that never were speculations more wild and unadvised than those in which he had of late years embarked.

Her quick discernment made her readily aware that her father's animadversions on the conduct of his relative, though neither harsh nor exaggerated, fell unpleasantly on the old man's ears; it made him sick at heart, to hear the past follies of his departed master discanted on. She was not sorry, therefore, when her father cut short the conversation by going in search of some papers he needed;

ing Maxwell, as he left the room, to wait his rn. Cecilia, as quick as thought, without og a moment of so precious an opportunity, reached the old clerk, and with no slight trepion, but striving to appear as calm as possible, order that she might not by her abrupt and nge proceeding confuse and bewilder him, said kly, but in a distinct voice:

Tell me, Mr. Maxwell, supposing that Miss cliffe had a friend very desirous of relieving her a her impending poverty, could you not place in possession of the sum of money designed her, without giving her the slightest clue to the overy of the donor?"

he old man heard this question with the test amazement, from which he gradually reared, and replied:

Possibly I could,—but alas!" continued he tears in his eyes, "which of that helpless han's friends, as they are called, will be disposed act towards her?"

That is not now the question," answered Ce.

"If such an one there were, could he dei on your secrecy and fidelity?"

He could," replied Maxwell, earnestly. "But her do these questions tend, Miss Johnson?" I will tell you. I will trust my secret to your ing, Mr. Maxwell. I have a sum of money h, as soon as I shall be of age, I wish to fer to Miss Ratcliffe, but she must never whence it comes. Think how this can be

effected, and you shall hear further from me," s Cecilia, speaking rapidly, for she heard her father returning step, and she resumed her seat at a d tance.

The facility of proceeding, as far as Mercel was concerned, which this interview gave her, fill Cecilia with satisfaction, and she now proposed devote the rest of the day to a deep and care consideration of the best method of recommending her design to her father, and obtaining his consto its execution.

Now Cecilia's usual mode of proceeding 1 When any weighty subject occupied mind, she would seriously intend to proceed to tion only after the most mature deliberation; vet, in spite of this intention, she would, alm immediately that she had formed it, rush to encounter with apparently the most heedless pro pitation. Sometimes she bore away the palm victory so triumphantly, as to be led to think the after all, a sudden attack was far preferable to best preconcerted plans. Sometimes she for herself involved in difficulties, from which she : no means of escape, and deploring her rashu she would vow never again to undertake to c duct to a termination any affair that requi an exercise of judgment or caution. membrance of past misfortunes made her tren at her present situation. At length Max departed, and her father drew from his desk a letters, in the contents of which he soon bec

absorbed; and Cecilia, not venturing to break the silence he maintained, was gradually no less buried in her own thoughts.

Bright and pleasant pictures of Mercedes' restoration to happiness began to float before her yes, and letting her work fall from her hands, she sank into a delicious reverie.

Her father, as he refolded and laid aside the last of the letters which he had been perusing, raised his eyes to the thoughtful countenance of his daughter, and marked her abstracted air; but the beaming satisfaction of her eyes showed that the looked on to scenes on which it was pleasant to rest. There was, to her father's eye, a heavenly expression diffused over her whole countenance, and he regarded the picture she presented to him, in the easy attitude into which she had fallen, with a complacency which rendered him for a time unwilling to rouse her by the sound of his voice.

"Whither has your fancy flown, my dear child?" It last he said, in that voice of tenderness which we unconsciously habitual to him when he addressed her, and which, as it fell sweetly on Cecilia's tar, always made her heart warm towards her father with that ardent love which it was its nature to bestow on those who would ask, or only society it.

She fearlessly turned her dark eyes sparkling ith joy upon her father, as she replied spontacously, without a moment's hesitation: "I was wishing for my twenty-first birth come."

Her father smiled, and said:

"Why so, my Cecilia? What great will its arrival confer? Are you so impat the necklace of pearls that I have promise or are you contemplating some further which you think it will be impossible for to grant on such a day?"

Cecilia felt how nearly this last question the truth, and she hastily continued in reply

"I have a request to make indeed, but that day. You know, dearest papa, that next birth-day I shall come into an inder fortune, all my own, at my own disposal that is the reason I wish for it."

Her father was not a little surprised avowal so frankly made; but he quickly su that the gratification which she expected to from the event to which she looked forward not be of a selfish nature.

"Are you so very eager to acquire in dence?" he asked. "I see you are not to avow your desire for that of which you have no power to deprive you. Trusting security, will you proceed to tell me how yo to avail yourself of it?"

Her father's kind tone was far from i Cecilia with fear, and springing from her s came to the side of his chair, took his han in hers, and said: "I. only want to be independent for one day, one hour, one half-hour. Give me leave to do exactly as I like for that time, and then I will be content—nay more, best pleased, to be dependent on you for ever after."

"Why, Cecilia, I was beginning to think that after that eventful day you intended scarcely to ask my consent to your actions. But let me hear what you design."

"I design," replied Cecilia, rapidly changing colour, and her lip quivering with emotion, "I design to give the sum of money which my grand-mother left me to Mercedes, and to trust to you, dearest father, for all future provision for myself."

And Cecilia cast herself on her father's neck, and burst into a flood of passionate tears; then exzed with the apprehension that her vehemence would distress her father, and be considered by him as a proof that she was scarcely a rational being, and little fit to be trusted with the direction of her own conduct, she repressed her sobs as suddenly as they had broken forth; and hushing them into silence, lay with her face concealed on her father's breast, waiting for him to bid her raise it, in joyful acceptance of an unhesitating consent.

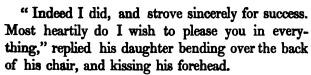
"And how long is it since you have entertained this scheme?" said her father, who continued to press her to his bosom, fondly laying his hand on her head, and smoothing the raven braids of her hair.



yourself, my dear child. I will think of what have said. I owe you so much, in return for ready confidence. I will think what we ca for your cousin; but mind, I make no present mises."

Cecilia scarcely knew whether to consider reception as favourable or not; she felt that thing would satisfy her short of what she had posed; but she saw plainly that she must not ture to touch again on the subject until her is should do so of his own accord, which he had dently no intention of doing at present; for he after requested her to write some letters as he did them. Poor Cecilia, who usually possessed pen of a ready writer, now almost fell into dis as her father detected her in the act of mencing on a fresh sheet of paper, an e which he had believed nearly brought to a l termination.

"Thank Heaven!" she exclaimed as she



"Yes," he answered, "only first I must let you please yourself, Cecilia. Is it not so?"

"How desirable it is then that the same thing should be equally pleasing to both!"

Her father smiled, and bid her go out for a drive, and leave him to repose.

"I am tired, child. Besides I expect my doctor, and he can amuse me till you return. Where shall you go?"

"Oh! to Mrs. Wilmot's certainly before I come back," replied Cecilia.

"Well, you may bring Mercedes to pass the evening with you, if you like, and if she like to come to see an old man with a gouty foot, nursed by a little daughter, active and ready enough, but not quite disposed to let him tyrannize over her, according to the established rule of plays and novels twenty years since."

"No," answered Cecilia, "I cannot exactly determine whether the world grows better or not, but since those days, parents certainly are improved; whether children are or are not I will not now stay to inquire, because, papa, you said you wished for repose."

And auguring well from her father's uninstigated proposition, she disappeared instantly that he might not have time to recall it.

In another moment, however, she flew back into the room, and hastily exclaimed:

"Now, dearest papa, I implore you not to mention our intention to Mercedes. No, not for the world! She would refuse to agree to it, I am sure. I know her better than any one else, and I settled with Mr. Maxwell this morning that she was to have it, without ever learning whence it.

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"My dear," replied her father, seriously, "I have not the slightest intention of speaking to any one on a subject which I have had no time to consider. I could have wished that you had been content to leave it unmentioned to others until you had consulted me. You are far too impetuous. You must learn a little self-command, or you will do many injuries to yourself and to your friends."

Cecilia's eyes were filled with tears at this not undeserved rebuke.

"I have displeased you. How grieved I am!"

"Let regret for the past lead to more thought for the future," replied her father, briefly, and Cecelia, seeing that he was not in a mood to say more, again departed.

Cecilia was successful in her mission to Mercedes, and brought her back to spend the evening with her and her father. She was touched and delighted by the kind, and even tender manner which he assumed whenever he addressed his young relative. Pity seemed to modulate his voice to an unusual softness. Cecilia was not sorry that Mer-

nentioned before him her still existing design ting her present tranquil abode, and making xertions which she regarded as duties. As atched with eager delight the approbation her father's countenance openly manifested, ir her cousin's departure bid him good night neerful hopes (though yet unsanctioned) of ag his final consent to her proposal.

## CHAPTER XI.

Pleasing was the smart,
And the tear precious that compassion shed
For her who pierced by sorrow's thrilling dart,
Did meekly bear the pang unmerited.

WORDSWORTH.

THE next day Cecilia was unable to visit Mercedes, and she passed the hours in eager anticipation of obtaining some reply from her father to her urgent request. As he maintained an unbroken silence, she amused herself by imagining every variety of speech by which he could possibly communicate to her a consent which she would not doubt of obtaining. She mentally held discussions in which she strove to give full weight to every objection that could be urged against her design, and combatted them all in turn with complete success. Most eloquent were the thanks which she prepared to be delivered after the attainment of victory. She grew weary, as evening approached, of these silent rehearsals of scenes that did not appear likely to be enacted, and she proceeded to put into practice & series of petty provocations which might, she hoped, lead her father to relent. Some men would have been induced to speak sooner, others more obstinately to prolong their silence by Cecilia's attempts; but Mr. Johnson was unmoved by them. At the intended time he broke through the silence which he had purposely maintained, and spoke to the following purpose.

He told Cecilia that at the age which she was so soon to attain, the law gave her a right to the disposal of whatever was her own; a right of which he did not desire to deprive her; nor would he shackle her use of it, nor frustrate her wishes, by hying on her any positive commands to which she might choose to yield obedience, though deeming their imposition arbitrary.

"If you at any time," he said, "proposed to do any thing absolutely contrary to duty, I would interfere, whatever were your age or the station you occupied. And if my most express refusal to maction your proceedings could stop them, it should be laid upon you. Thus will I act by my children matil I am laid in the grave. But in the present instance there is nothing wrong in what you propose. The very worst censure that could be passed on it, is that it is an inexpedient act. I would have you bestow due consideration on it, and hear attentively and weigh well all that I have to say; but the final decision shall be of your own making."

"Then it is already made!" exclaimed Cecilia, joyfully.

"No," replied her father in a tone of grave rebuke, "I gave you no permission to make it until nou had complied with the conditions I enjoined, and which you seem to forget."

"No, indeed, dearest papa," said Cecilia, wit real shame and regret for the hastiness of hexest reply; "I will not forget them. I have thought and on this subject already for a long time, I assure you, and I am most desirous to listen now to any thing you have to say. I thank you too, from the bottom of my heart, for the promise you have made to to watch over your thoughtless child, when increasing years have brought no proportionate growth = vt of wisdom; a promise which sounds to me not like a threat, but a most kind assurance. But may I not hear what you wish to say without delay & We have a long evening before us, secure from all Les a interruption. I will bring this stool, and place is there at your feet, which will look as if I meant to be extremely humble, instead of what you will find and me—very combative and unpersuadable," she said, venturing to smile again.

Her father submitted unresistingly to her arrangements, and as she placed herself on the lowly seat which she chose to occupy, he put his hand fondly on her head, as he began to address her thus:

"I will suggest one thing for your serious consideration, Cecilia. When you propose to strip yourself of a competent provision which Providence has bestowed on you, and to render yourself wholly dependent upon me, you should not forget that I am subject to the same contingencies as others, and Heaven only knows whether Mercedes' fate may not, sooner or later, be your own. This is a weighty objection to your plan."

"Nay, but father, with such a terrible example of imprudence before your eyes in your own family, you will surely be more careful for us, and will lay up something in the days of abundance against the time of need."

Her father looked on her for a moment in silence, and then answered:

"I cannot help believing, Cecilia, that supposing I had made such a provision, you would be the first to desire that I should lay my hand upon it, when honour was at stake."

"Thank you, dearest father," said Cecilia, with glistening eyes; "thank you for that belief. If all that I had were not previously given away, it would undoubtedly then be for you. What you have just said, makes me almost wish to reserve it for such a purpose; but then your need of it may never Mercedes' necessities are present and real, so it must be hers, I think. And if anything happened to you, such a sum would be but a drop in the ocean; nor would it suffice to do much for the comfort of my mother and sisters, while for Mercedes, it really is quite enough. Quite enough! poor girl-if her father could hear such a pittance called quite enough for her for whom he amassed his princely fortune! With regard to laying it by for myself, I am more disposed to obey literally the injunction of 'take no thought for to-morrow,' if to take thought must compel me to relinquish the performance of this act of charity."

Her father paused awhile in consideration, and then replied:

"Well, I will relieve you from the imme necessity of so doing, by making you acquai with a design which I have lately framed, speedily intend to execute. The disastrous rewith which my cousin's once brilliant career to a close, and the consequent sufferings en on his child, which my heart has bled to wi have shocked me so much, and have excit me such a lively apprehension of beholding a tition of similar distress in my own family, have come to a resolution no longer to end their welfare and my own peace, but to retire business with the not inconsiderable wealth I have at present secured. I might, it is look to gather a far richer harvest by continued but it would be with a risk of what I now po My health was beginning to give way mer consequence of the arduous labours of my ca still less can it stand against the additional a which I have never been able to drive from mind, since poor Ratcliffe's miserable end.

"The portion which I intend to assign t daughters, (and I have always declared that should equal that of the others) is £10,0 each. This is a competent provision, but nothing more. The question which you he consider, is whether you will divest your what you may, if you will, enjoy in addition

"This is a point for you to decide, and me. I certainly do not deny that I conside first mentioned sum as adequate to supply



wants. Otherwise, I should labour to allot a arger one to you, and to your sisters."

"Oh! my dearest father!" answered Cecilia, earnestly clasping her hands, and with tears streaming from her eyes, "if I am indeed at liberty to lecide, if I have your full consent to do so, can you doubt my decision? Half the sum that you bestow on me should suffice my wants, rather than I would enrich myself by leaving my cousin in beggary!"

"You are young and enthusiastic. The time may come when you will regret your prodigal generosity, and ask why your father who was old, and ought to have been wise, did not restrain it."

"Now Heaven forbid that my love of this world's lucre should increase with years! This is an evil against which I will pray, and strive with my whole heart. Oh, father! when the hour of departure must be near, is that the time to cling to those possessions which we cannot take with us? How often do we say, when speaking of a temporary habitation it is not worth while to repair this, or to beautify that; if we were going to stay here, the case would be altered. So surely will it be with us as we grow old. We shall grow less eager to have wherewithal to procure the pleasures and the luxuries of life, rather than more so. I will never learn that worldly wisdom which would. lead me to condemn the more generous sentiments of my youth."

"But, supposing that Mercedes should prove



will allower you as it I could. Offorg as affection for her, I think I may venture to that in making this gift, I am less actuated for her, than by love to Him, who commer fatherless to the care of His servants. the case, ingratitude, though it might wor to the quick, could scarcely inspire regret for I had done. I should feel that I had 'c bread upon the waters,' and I should I recover it again, though, perhaps, after man How often does my heart swell with the 1 brance of those words, that assure us that w do to the least of the poor in Christ, we If they forget; He is not forgetf their affection change, with Him there is 1 If they misconceive us, He rea ableness. hearts aright. Oh, Father! no disappoi awaits me here. Father, do you not percei God has here given me the means and p me with the occasion of doing a good action with what joy and thankfulness, with wha bling haste and eagerness ought I to avail

life, or any great piece of good fortune, as rld would call it, be obtained; how would it you, and you, perhaps, would blame yourself. 1 neglect to seize it, and I suffered through your Be not blind then to my real interests, Such is now the case—I am in a enviable position—do not let the time pass which you may, if you will, lay up for me re in Heaven, imperishable treasure, that make itself wings, and fly away; as you fear that our earthly treasure may do. Reer, you who are so skilled in worldly transacthe gracious promise of Him who fails not s word, that what we give to the poor is lent n; and by Him shall be paid us again. Give rmission to cast my mite into the treasury, e who approved of the widow for so doing, so approve of our deed. Oh, Father! as I near to lay this gift on His altar, I have such e of my unworthiness to do Him any service, w heart overflows with feelings of gratitude, as Mary must have felt, when allowed to His sacred head, and to wipe His feet with ir!"

r father was visibly touched by this earnest nce, while Cecilia, far from giving an exagd expression to her feelings, refrained from ng them in their full force. She gave utterto but a few of the deep thoughts that ed on her mind. Nor did she, as she felt disposed to do, cast herself on her knees before her father, and with tears and uplifted hands implore his acquiescence. She knew that she was always too vehement, too impetuous; and painfully controlling her emotions, now sat in resolute silence.

"And do you really wish," asked her father, "be accomplish this project unknown to Mercedes?"

"Indeed I do!" exclaimed Cecilia eagerly.
"Without this secrecy, I should lose half my pleasure. I would that I could verify the words, that the right hand should not know what the left hand does. But you are my right hand, dear father, and I am forced to let you know."

Her father smiled, and then replied:

"Perhaps when you have carefully guarded this secret from Mercedes, you will begin almost to resent her insensibility to the obligation."

"Impossible!" said Cecilia with indignation.

"I would not love Mercedes merely as the object of my favour, and exact a return of gratitude with scrupulous jealousy. I would love her disinterestedly, for whatsoever things are lovely those I can discern in her. This is the only foundation for a durable affection; such as I wish mine ever to be—undying as my soul. May my friendships be ever based on esteem, or they will to me be sources only of restless misery!"

"Heaven forbid, my generous child, that you should ever suffer thus!" said her father, tenderly; and they then separated with hearts glowing with increased affection towards each other. They felt

sif in that night's conversation they had stepped side out of the paths of trouble and turmoil, which one of them at least was daily forced to tred; they had shaken off the dust that soils the wayside traveller, and had gained a height above the din and confusion of the crowd. There they had enjoyed a brief repose, refreshed their thirsty pirits by a draught from the well of truth, and insted their eyes on a fair prospect of the proised land, distant indeed, but still rendered clearly stinguishable by the bright rays of hope that unined it.

## CHAPTER XII.

You stood before me like a thought, A dream remembered in a dream.

COLEBIDGE.

One day Mrs. Wilmot requested Mercedes to accompany her to an exhibition in which she desired to see a work of her son's. She listened to the proposal at first with some interest and apparent pleasure; but the beam of sunshine quickly faded from her face, and she sighed deeply as she prepared to comply. Mercedes was still clad in mourning—sad remembrances, which continued to infest her mind, and the continued delicacy of her health made her cheek of an unnatural paleness, and her form was more fragile than it had been in former days. As she left the house, she said softly, and in a tone of inward satisfaction, scarcely designed to reach Mrs. Wilmot's ear:

"I do not think that any one would recognize me."

Shocked at the melancholy truth which these words expressed, Mrs. Wilmot thought it best not to reply, and walked on in silence. It pleased her much to observe that, when they arrived at the gallery, Mercedes, though perhaps half reluctantly, manifested a curiosity, an interest and a pleasure,

the scene around her, which none less congenial her taste could have excited at a time when e believed her heart to be 'empty of all ings but grief.' She seemed for the time to get everything but the present, and gave her ole attention to the pictures around her. The ght with which it filled them to perceive how the ular superiority of Julian's picture distinguished om all the others, and made it the object of ral admiration, was expressed on both their The eloquent face of Mercedes ned with a satisfaction long unknown, and the of Julian's mother was enhanced when she the brightness of her son's success shed a ring light on the gloomy path of the orphan. ile Mercedes wholly bent her eager gaze on an's work, Mrs. Wilmot was attracted by the est scrutiny of a young man of fashionable rior, who had entered the room with a party ch he quitted when Mercedes, whom he now iously regarded, first caught his eve. len start of joyful surprise, his changing ur, his uncertainty whether to advance or to e, all excited Mrs. Wilmot's attention, and she at once on the supposition that this was some ner friend, (something certainly beyond a com-1 acquaintance) who recognized the merchant's zhter in spite of her humble garb and her iged aspect. As she glanced at the unheeding cedes, she thought that at that moment she t look scarcely less lovely than in those brighter OL II.

days, when probably the stranger first saw her. The heat of the room, and the pleasure that was excited in her, had summoned a glow to her cheek and given a brilliancy to her eye, banishing the leaden look of melancholy which now ordinarily shrouded their beauty. Mrs. Wilmot little doubted that in the young man who hovered near them, she saw a rival of her son; one who would come to trouble their peaceful life; one who, to judge from his exterior, might prove dangerous to Julian. She feared also, that to meet with recognition from any former acquaintance, would cruelly agitate Mercedes, and yielding to this idea she prepared to lead her away.

"He is younger than Lord Sylvester can be," thought Mrs. Wilmot, as she did so: "younger and much handsomer, I should think. Good Heavens, it cannot be his brother!"

Terrified beyond measure at the possibility of this fear proving just, she hastily took Mercedes' arm. As she did so, however, Mercedes turned her head in the direction of the stranger, and her eye fell upon him, to Mrs. Wilmot's inexpressible relief, without a glance of recognition, and would have wandered regardlessly on, had he not appeared to be, from the moment that he met it, irresistibly impelled to her side. He advanced, and with hurried accents and visible emotion, addressed her by her name, earnestly inquiring after her health. Mercedes at first, with much astonishment and discomposure, replied to his words in a voice so

low and trembling as to be scarcely audible; then making an effort to recollect herself, and to recall him to her memory, she said:

"Sir Alfred Rayleigh, I believe?"

"Yes," he replied, "I am lately arrived in England. Are you," he said eagerly, "are you taying in town?"

Mercedes replied in the affirmative, and though be manner was, from the time he addressed her. abstracted and unexpressive of any interest, the young Baronet did not again leave her side. The gentleness of his voice, the delicacy of his attention. and the evident struggle that it cost him to veil his pity, awakened Mrs. Wilmot's compassion for him, and she often replied to those remarks which seemed to fall unheeded on Mercedes' ear. She he felt that, however unwilling she might be to see another bear away the prize which she desired to behold the reward of all Julian's toils, she was by no means authorised to repulse the advances of there as long as he persisted in carefully abstaining from making any himself. She, therefore, listened courteously to Sir Alfred's request to be mitted to call on Miss Ratcliffe at her house; and without any false shame, told him the unbionable quarter in which he must seek their amble abode.

Mercedes, who had sunk into absolute silence der Sir Alfred had joined them, did not speak min until they were pursuing their walk home-rads. Then she said to Mrs. Wilmot:

"Why did you tell Sir Alfred Rayleigh we are?"

"Why not, my love? Had you any re wishing to repel the friendly interest which peared so desirous to show?"

"I would rather never again see any whom I used to know. Oh! that not one might ever find me out!"

"Nay, my dear Mercedes, you used t Julian, and surely of the many whom you some are worthy to be still esteemed. could be more indicative of kind feeling and than the manner of the gentleman whom to-day. What footing his former acqu was on I do not know; but at present, I ca why you should reject his friendliness," repl Wilmot, who began to suspect that in him seen a rejected lover, who ventured to it hope of future success.

"I knew him very slightly, and have no his friendship," answered Mercedes, coldly, said no more.

Julian passed the evening with them a Mercedes talked to him of his picture, and sparkled with pleasure as she told him of versal admiration she had seen lavished Never had they appeared to feel such muterest and tenderness, and Mrs. Wilmot, silently regarded them, could not but deathe happiness which she believed to be in them, might receive no interruption.

ad probably forgotten the occurrence of the corning, for she did not mention it. Mrs. Willot's curiosity had been too much awakened to low of her doing so, and she waited an opportuty to allude to it, when their thoughts received other direction by a communication made by Jun, not without some caution.

"Lord Sylvester," he said, "is, I find, expected town daily."

Poor Mercedes! All the past rushed back at sintelligence.

"I shall go to his house every morning till he ives," continued Julian.

Tears started into Mercedes' eyes.

"I shall be very glad to see him," she said, in oice of much emotion. Then, unable to control feelings, she hastily rose, and left the room. Ither Mrs. Wilmot nor Julian felt surprise at agitation she displayed, and they deemed it to suffer her to regain composure in solitude. In after her departure, his mother broke the nee which Julian seemed disposed to maintain, inquiring if he knew Sir Alfred Rayleigh.

'What of him?" said Julian, starting. "Yes, new him in Rome."

"We met him to-day, and he recognised Meres," replied Mrs. Wilmot, and she related all that occurred, and all that she had thence red. "I cannot help thinking," she said, as concluded, "that his visit will not long be deed, and that he will shortly make an offer of his d to Mercedes."

James. Esterned with a disturbed countenance; in return he related to his mother all that had imposed during Sir Alfred's stay in Rome, the conversation which he had overheard at the Colosseum, and the young Baronet's consequent flight from the scene of danger. All that his mother had remarked excited in him the greatest alam; he drew the most inauspicious angury from Mercedes' scene on the subject, saw his present happiness overthrown, and himself driven back to the terments of the situation which he had occupied while Mercedes was bound to Arundel.

Finding himself unable to pursue these painful thoughts, and vet maintain that calmness of demeanour which is befitting in the presence of any other human being, and equally unable to drive them from his mind, he hastily took leave of his mother, and departed. Before he left the house, he stole with a silent step to the door of Mercedes' chamber, and listening attentively, he heard the voice of weeping. Wringing his hands in the anguish of the moment, he turned away, and rapidly descended the stairs. The blankness of despair never chilled his heart so entirely as when he closed the door behind him; and in the time that elapsed between that moment and his throwing himself on his thorny couch, such was the distraction of his mind, that he scarcely formed a coherent thought

## CHAPTER XIII.

The monument and pledge of humble love; His humble love whose hope shall ne'er rise higher Than for a pardon that he dare admire.

WALLER.

Ho in odio me stesso, ed amo altrui.

When Julian was restored to the silence and solitude of his own chamber, he strove to recover the manly fortitude which he had lost, and determined narrowly to examine the duties of his present situation, and to bring unhesitatingly into action all those sentiments of disinterested devotion which he had entertained before the hour of their trial came. He thought of the amiability character which he believed to exist in Sir Alfred; he thought of the rank and affluence it was is to give; he thought of the proof of generous effection which he was about to yield; and in the dence of Mercedes he read at least uncertainty as to the return which she was disposed to make. Meditating long and deeply on these considerations, he at last resolved to seek his mother early, and counsel her to aid Sir Alfred's suit by all the arguments which supported it, and by especiby urging those he should suggest.

earnestness he frequently reiterated a prayer that hise conduct might be preserved upright in the temptation that beset him, and that Mercedes' happiness might be ensured.

Julian was too sincere in his intentions to falter in the morning over the resolutions of the past night, and he returned to his mother's house before he went to his studio, and before she had risen. He seated himself beside her bed, and with a calmness which might have deceived any one but her, proceeded to tell her the result of his deliberations. He dwelt long on the happiness of seeing Mercedes restored to the station which she had formely occupied; a station not only freed from the dreadful anticipations of want, from which they, humble as they were, were able to relieve her, but one worthy to be adorned by her beauty and her accomplishments. He pointed out to her that if the disinterested love of Sir Alfred should lead him to seek Mercedes now, and lay his wealth at her feet, when she was forsaken by all others, they might justly believe that he would be careful of her future happiness, and would earn her grateful affection.

"If such be her happy destiny, mother, let us rejoice," he said; and he rose to depart.

His mother held his hand wistfully; he turned away his head from what he knew to be an appealing look. She saw that it was useless to expostulate, but she let him depart reluctantly, and sighed deeply as he disappeared. Touched as she was by

his generous self-devotion, alarmed and grieved at his impending danger, she still had no thought but that of faithfully performing the task which he had imposed upon her. She was not unconvinced by his arguments; she felt that she should be untrue to her trust, did she fail to offer Mercedes all the counsels of a mother on this occasion. But though eager not to be misled by her warm affection for her son, she lost not sight of the real duties of a mother, and she knew well that they were opposed to such a line of conduct as should induce the young and friendless creature, whom she had taken to her bosom as a daughter, to forfeit her self-esteem, and endanger her true happiness, by accepting rank and wealth from the hand of one, to whom her heart was all the while indifferent. But was the heart of Mercedes indifferent, or was it even more than that: was it preoccupied? Such was the inquiry suggested by the observations of the past evening. Mrs. Wilmot could not reply to this question; her mind was disturbed by contrary lopes and fears, and at last she exclaimed, as she quitted her chamber to join Mercedes:

"She will resign her truest happiness if she resign the affection of such a heart as Julian's!"

She scarcely expected Mercedes to have rewered the agitation of the preceding evening, but she was met by her with an air of mild placidity; and her manner, if serious, was not dejected. Mercedes had of late struggled much to acquire an unvarying serenity, which she thought she owed to the friends who strove cheer her, and a self-possession which deemed becoming one who was summoned Providence to think and act independently. It is true, that she had not been able to hear of the near approach of Lord Sylvester, who had been so intimately connected with all her joys and sorrows, without uncontrollable agitation; but this morning she had resumed her habitual composure, and spoke to Mrs. Wilmot, even cheerfully, of the pleasure which it would occasion Julian to see his early patron.

"I am sure," she added, "that Lord Sylvester will sympathize with him in his late success almost as much as we do."

These last words, and the sweetness and affection of the smile that accompanied them, rendered. Mrs. Wilmot more than ever averse to her task.

Nevertheless, availing herself of a moment me which Mercedes suspended her occupations and pensively rested her cheek on her hand, she addressed her, saying:

"Of what are you thinking, my dear? Of your expected visitor?"

"Yes," replied Mercedes; "but he cannot be here to-day."

Perhaps Mrs. Wilmot was a little surprised this frank avowal, but she only remarked:

"I don't know why he should defer a will which he seemed so desirous to make."

"Is he then arrived?" exclaimed Mercedes in much agitation. "Your son has seen him and would not tell me of it."

"Julian's acquaintance with him appears very slight," returned Mrs. Wilmot, rather coldly, on perceiving Mercedes' excessive emotion.

"Good Heavens! what is it you mean? Is Lord Sylvester in London, and when shall I see him?"

"Lord Sylvester!" replied Mrs. Wilmot in much stonishment. "Pardon me, my love, I thought that we were speaking of Sir Alfred Rayleigh."

"Indeed!" said Mercedes, with a look of sudden recollection and of some disappointment. "Indeed, I have scarcely thought of him."

"Well then, my dear," replied Mrs. Wilmot; "perhaps it is time that you should."

"I have no wish so to occupy my thoughts, unless there is very urgent necessity for so doing;"

Mrs. Wilmot was sick at heart, thinking what a day of suffering and of suspense this was for Julian, to that she was not disposed to be easily pleased; perhaps, she fancied that Mercedes' blindness was affected; she answered briefly:

"I thought there was, but you must know best."
Mercedes was silent; there was something in Mrs. Wilmot's voice and manner that gave to these words the tone of a rebuke. At length she rose, and came across the room to Mrs. Wilmot, who had not raise her head from her work, and throwing berself on a little low seat beside her, looked up not her face, and taking her hand, pressed it earnestly to her lips.

"My more than mother," she said, "dearest, dearest Mrs. Wilmot, I have no mysteries, no concealment from you, and yet you seem to think that I have. Let us understand each other clearly. This Sir Alfred Rayleigh—you saw that when I met him yesterday I scarcely recognized him. You could not think that I was playing a part."

She paused, fixing her eyes earnestly on Mrs. Wilmot, as if her life depended on her answer.

"Not for a moment, my beloved child," replied Mrs. Wilmot, stooping down and kissing her forehead, while a tear from her eye fell on it.

"Well then, if I scarcely recognized him yesterday, why need I think of him to-day?"

"Because he evidently thinks of you, most deeply."

"Do you really suppose that he does so? I cannot. Let me tell you all that I have ever known of Sir Alfred Rayleigh, and then you will judge differently. You know that I met him in Rome. I certainly fancied that he did fall in low with me, as it is called. Perhaps I was vain," she said blushing; "and easily persuaded of these things. I was more thoughtless then, and regarded other people's feelings far less than I ought. You have heard," she continued, the colour on her cheek burning brighter and brighter as she spoke, "of Mrs. Annesly Marchmont. Well, I was unworthy enough to feel proud to show her that I had my train of admirers, as well as she. This folly was very brief. I think I never indulged

so mean a gratification but once; but that once when I met Sir Alfred. Nevertheless, only a few sys elapsed before his departure was announced to e, and from that time I have never seen him main. Does not this prove to you that he mustive been absolutely indifferent?"

"No, I think that he had some other reasons redeparting, and probably soon after he left you, heard of your engagement. I cannot but think am his manner yesterday, that he will pay you an rely visit, which may prove a decisive one."

"What!" said Mercedes, glancing at her sable ess; "will he not leave me unmolested while I ear this?"

"In other circumstances probably he would, but yours, his affection, which must be generous and sinterested, will prompt him to relieve you immeately from all care and anxiety with regard to the ture."

Mercedes wept, and Mrs. Wilmot most affeconately embracing her, lamented the necessity of wing pained her.

"I had caused you either grief or displeasure, then first you spoke to me, I am sure," said

"No, my dear child; why do you imagine this?"

"Because when you kissed my forehead, you shed

"Ah! Mercedes, that tear was not for you."

"Then you forget your own sorrows to think of ne!"

"Your conversation, dearest," replied Mrs. Wilmot evasively, "has relieved me of part of my pain. Now promise me to think seriously on this subject, on which I feel convinced that you will soon be called upon to act. May Heaven's blessing be with you, and may happiness and prosperity be restored to you!"

Mercedes cast herself into Mrs. Wilmot's arms, and bursting into a flood of tears, exclaimed:

"I can never again be so happy anywhere as with you!" then disengaging herself from her friend's embrace, she retired from the room.

Mrs. Wilmot had cautiously refrained from telling her that her words were in any measure dictated by her son; for such an apparent declaration of the absence of love and jealousy on his part, she thought would scarcely fail to influence Mercedes' conduct.

When Mercedes returned, her countenance wore such an air of serene dignity, as at once to convince Mrs. Wilmot that her line of conduct was decided on, not capriciously, nor thoughtlessly; and therefore, whatever it might be, she felt that she might conscientiously abstain from further counsel; in this thought she found inexpressible relief. It was now past noon, and Mercedes found Mrs. Wilmot prepared to go out.

"What!" she exclaimed, with sudden unessiness, "will you leave me?"

"I will return in an hour," Mrs. Wilmot replied; "but my engagement is of some importance; I am afraid that it must be kept."

When Mrs. Wilmot was gone, Mercedes placed her hand on the bell, but paused before she rang it.

"No," she said, "if he come, I will see him. It will soon be over," and she removed her hand. An hour past, Mrs. Wilmot was not returned, and before she came, Mercedes found herself alone with Sir Alfred Rayleigh, forced to listen to his fervent protestations of love.

## CHAPTER XIV.

Veggio a molto languir poca mercede.

PETRABCA.

Hear me, but speak a word—
Oh! thou wilt speak again of banishment.

ROMEO AND JULIE.

THE unfortunate Baronet could not credit that he heard aright when a calm, gentle, but decided refusal was all that met his ears.

"Surely," at length he said, "you cannot intend that from this time I shall be banished from your presence? I have been too precipitate, I see that I have. Is it not possible that time, and a farther acquaintance may effect a change in your sentiments?"

"It is not possible," replied Mercedes seriously; "it would therefore be most unjustifiable in me to afford you means of nourishing an unfortunate passion, which can only be the cause of misery, for it would be ever unrequited."

He seemed thunderstruck; then he continued with that vehemence which weak men are most apt to display:

"Impossible; I cannot, I will not take your final answer to-day. Think of what Lhave said when I am gone. All my possessions I lay at your feet, and if to you they are valueless, so are they henceforth to me. All I ask is that you will let me
remain at your side. You shall be unmolested by
supplications; my patience shall be unwearied.
You alone shall unsolicited appoint a period to my
suffering. Consider what you reject. You have
known prosperity and adversity. Would it be
nothing to you to be restored to the possession of
rank and wealth, even beyond what you have lost?
Your youth and your beauty demand that you
should be reinstated in affluence."

- "Such arguments as these," said Mercedes with increasing coldness, "are without force. Vanity and ambition have lost their sway. I have been rejected by the world, and have learnt the hollowness of its favours. The merchant's daughter in that brilliant sphere to which you would recall her, with her wealth was ridiculed, and in her poverty is despised."
- "But the truth and sincerity of my affection," interrupted Sir Alfred.
- "I thank you for it, from the bottom of my heart; but I should be little solicitous for your happiness and my own did I consent to unite myself to you for life. It would be a hard trial for you to meet the displeasure of your noble relations, and for me to encounter their scorn."
- "Oh! that that false woman had not sealed my lips, when I was with you first! If I had then won you for my bride, you would never have known the reverses of fortune that have befallen you."

"You are too generous," said Mercedes with emotion; "but I will not let you nourish false regrets. At no time would you have received any reply from my lips different to that which they now speak."

"To what then am I to attribute this excessive coldness? Spare me, Miss Ratcliffe, spare me the anguish of believing myself hateful to you. Tell me that you love another; entreat me to assist my rival; say that your heart is not your own, and that you cannot love me; do anything but tell me thus coldly that you will not."

His anguish affected Mercedes, and she seemed to falter.

"Tell me," he continued with impetuosity; "can the base, unworthy Wentworth still influence your affections?"

"No;" said Mercedes with majesty. "No, it is not so. It is true that I was blinded, misled, and abused. But it was a temporary delusion; the fruit of subtle art working on unsuspecting youth. It was a bright and pleasant dream; on waking from it, I wept. The reed I leaned on pierced me, but the wound was slight; and the very tears that I shed washed away the scar."

"Oh! if that heart be indeed unoccupied, let me at least try to win it!"

"Sir Alfred, it corresponds little with the generosity of your previous conduct, thus to seek to wrest from me a secret, which, if it exist, I may well wish to withhold. Now leave me, I beseech you, in pity to yourself and to me. How I wish to lose your love! Only remember that Mercedes Ratcliffe ISTANCY.

√ fortunate she could ned in the hour of aderous hand that was ex-

aer proffered hand, as she cons; and pressing it passionately to from the room. On the stairs he Mrs. Wilmot; he hastily passed her by greeting. One glance at his countenance that Julian was uninjured.

Wilmot entered the room which her guest abruptly quitted, and found Mercedes in a 'tears. She approached her, and embracfondly, whispered:

prudent girl!"

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hat could I do otherwise? Would you d.me accept his generous offer without rehis love?" replied Mercedes, who easily at her friend's rebuke was but affected.

t why so prompt to refuse? Did he not our heart?"

idid, to the quick," returned Mercedes, in a deep feeling.

not then dismiss him thus hastily. See him; allow him to visit you, and leave the time."

u urge me," said Mercedes impatiently, "to is noble generosity by doing him the greatry I can inflict. All I can ever wish is, may forget me quickly."

he evening Julian returned; but many

times he walked up and down the gloomy street before he summoned courage to raise his hand to the door and knock for admittance. His mother awaited his entrance with the utmost eageness, and impatiently seizing his hand, led him into a room and closed the door.

"She has rejected him," she said; "I knew that she would."

Julian turned so pale at this announcement, that his mother was alarmed.

"Good Heavens!" he exclaimed, "is it possible?"

"Will you now be satisfied that she loves you?" asked his mother impatiently.

"God forbid that I should be the cause of her rejection of Sir Alfred," replied Julian thoughtfully; his mother heard him with a gesture of indignation, and Julian regardless of it continued: "I will see her myself. I have promised to be a brother to her, and I will open her eyes to the folly of this precipitate resolution."

"Indeed, Julian," exclaimed his mother, provoked at his adherence to his premeditated design, "I really believe that you are mad. No man ever took half the pains to win the woman he loved that you take to lose her. I am becoming so weary of your incorrigible folly, that I almost hope your attempts may be crowned with success."

"You must see as plainly as I do," replied Julian gravely, "that there is but one line of conduct that I ought to pursue."

"I see nothing of the kind. Attribute it only to the habit I have so long had of complying with all your wishes, fanciful or not, that I do not now go to Mercedes, and open her eyes to the truth which you so sedulously veil from her."

And Mrs. Wilmot made a movement towards the door, which Julian intercepted in much alarm.

"Mother, I entreat you, if you cannot feel with me (and I believe it is your love for me that blinds you) at least do not act contrary to my will."

"Well," said his mother with a sigh, "I leave you free to sacrifice your own happiness if you will; but, if confirmed in the idea I entertain, that the happiness of Mercedes also is concerned, I must no longer remain so passive as I have been."

"Let me speak to Mercedes this evening my-self."

"What! that you may convince her that you do not love her?"

"That I may prevail on her to act with prudence; all that I will ask of her is delay."

"Well; so be it."

His mother, in compliance with the request which he had made, left Julian in the course of the evening alone with Mercedes. Rousing himself from the silent abstraction in which he had been buried, and discarding the book which he had only appeared to read, he drew nearer to the place where Mercedes sat. When he approached, she laid aside the work that occupied her, and inquired if he had heard any fresh tidings of Lord Sylvester that day.

"None," he answered; "he had been to his house and he had not arrived. But you," he continued, "have had a visit from a former acquaintance to-day, my mother tells me."

Mercedes blushed deeply as she assented.

"Pardon me, Miss Ratcliffe," said Julian, with all the calmness he could assume, "have I not of late been honoured by you with the name of brother, and is there any service that a brother could perform that you would not look for at my hands?"

He paused as if for an answer, but receiving none continued:

"May I farther presume that the duties of a brother also devolve upon me; am I privileged to offer those counsels which would become the lips of one, and thus to prove that I feel all the interest in your welfare with which the breast of a brother would glow?"

"I am very willing," murmured Mercedes faintly, "to hear anything you have got to say."

"In truth," said Julian earnestly, "from the time that you needed a protector, I have looked on myself as your guardian, and most heartily have I striven faithfully to fulfil my self-arrogated trust. Rebuke my presumption, if you will."

"You have my warmest thanks," replied Mercedes, scarcely refraining from tears.

"Well, then, I will confess to you at once that my mother has made me acquainted with all that passed yesterday and to-day; and my most earnest desire is to prevail on you to retract your too hasty Rayleigh is far too slight to allow you to pledge fourself in any way to him, I readily agree; but that for the result of a farther knowledge of his haracter, before you reject an offer, the generous sinterestedness of which says so much in his wour, nor fear that it will be difficult for you obtain this requisite knowledge, before you enset your happiness to his keeping. I will seek become acquainted with his real disposition; I learn whether his affections have hitherto been kle or lightly bestowed; I will discover whether a conduct has been marked by rectitude and rict honour—"

"Seek none of these things on my account," plied Mercedes with dignity, rising from her at as she spoke. "My conduct to-day was acated by motives which were dictated by conience as well as inclination. I can neither repent retract. I have dismissed Sir Alfred, and cantrecal him. If by this proceeding I have dispointed my best friends, and even incurred their buke—" her voice faltered, and she could not reced; at length with an effort she added, "I n indeed unhappy." Then, without waiting to ar any reply, she hastily quitted the room.

Mercedes returned no more that night, and her llow was wet with tears, not the least bitter of I that she had lately shed. The words which she ten repeated, as she restlessly turned from side to le, were:



and to see him daily and hourly at I But the eager wish to be relieved from his ous presence was speedily followed by of separation, and a consciousness that : practising a vain self-delusion in imagin any pain could be compared to that of d from where he was. Could she rise in th ing to commence a toilsome day, uncheere presence? Could she forego all expression thoughts and feelings to the sole person wh stood and sympathized with them all? As p proof of his tender solicitude crowded on h she resolved that she would not endure a v exile from the side of the only being up whose affection could suffice to render he She anxiously repeated to herself every ex which seemed to disprove apathy, that I fallen from his lips; and in her searching of every trifling circumstance that had during their present intercourse, she reme spoken in the faltering accents of her voice?—never betrayed by the hand that trembled beneath his gaze, as his directing eye followed its motions? He had given no sign that he had read, heard, or seen the confession. This blindness made Mercedes conscious that there was but one line of conduct for her to pursue.

"I must go hence," she said resolutely. "I must not live a helpless dependent on their charity. I will rise and be doing. I will show them that I have fortitude and energy enough to provide for my own independence, and that I need not cast myself on Sir Alfred, or on any other for support."

After the feverish and interrupted slumbers of the night, Mercedes awoke to reiterate these resolutions.

## CHAPTER XV.

I' vo che sappi in qual maniera Tratto mi sono, e qual vita è la mia, Ardomi e struggo ancor, com' io solia, Laura mi volve, e son pur quel ch' i' m'era.

PETRABCA

LET us return to Julian. This morning he heard with joy, in reply to his usual inquires, that Lord Sylvester had arrived on the preceding night, and that being informed of his repeated visits, had given orders for his admittance even to his bedside, which directions were now complied with, and it was with the most heartfelt cordiality that the two friends grasped each other's hands, and uttered the warmest self-congratulations on the termination of their separation.

Lord Sylvester asked after the lapse of a few minutes:

"How is Miss Ratcliffe? The last letter that I received from you told me of her removal to your mother's house."

"Where she is still," replied Julian, briefly, and not without embarrassment.

"Well, I hope that I have arrived in time. Remember, I must give away the bride. I will allow no one else that privilege."

"It is one that I cannot promise you, my Lord, for I know of no present occasion for exercising it," returned Julian. drily.

"Is that possible?" said his friend, casting a continizing glance upon him, but rather in joke than in earnest. "Are you changed? A second Wentworth? You no longer love her then?"

"Still more than my life," answered Julian, withdrawing his eyes for the first time from the accounter of those of Lord Sylvester.

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Lord Sylvester, as sudden thought struck him. "My dear Wilmot," and he took his hand affectionately, "can the have rejected so faithful a heart?" and he spoke in a voice of the sincerest commiseration.

"No," replied Julian.

"Nor accepted it?"

" No."

"What am I to understand?"

"That Miss Ratcliffe has learnt to regard me as a brother, and that I have sought nothing more. I consider myself as unauthorised as ever to do so. She has suffered no degradation in my eyes, and I have not reached any superior height as yet to that on which I stood when first she knew me. I will not say that were this last point altered, I might not then think myself privileged to act differently, but by that time probably—"

Lord Sylvester interrupted him with a gesture of impatience, little deeming that in these last

words Julian had relaxed more from the rigidity of his plan than he ever had before.

"My dear Wilmot," he said, "I am glad I am come back to put an end to such folly."

"For Heaven's sake, my Lord," said Julian, eagerly, "do not interfere rashly." And before he left him, he proceeded to tell him, under strict injunctions of secrecy, of Sir Alfred Rayleigh's conduct. Lord Sylvester listened attentively until he learnt how Mercedes had proceeded, and then he seemed much relieved.

"It was nobly done," he said, "nobly done on the part of Sir Alfred, and not less nobly on hers, Julian. I will promise you that she loves you. Had her heart been free, it would have been vanquished by such disinterested affection."

"He may yet prevail;" replied Julian. "I entreated her last night not to dismiss him so hastily."

Lord Sylvester, whose hopes had remounted, felt really provoked.

"Will nothing satisfy you but to make her the wife of another?" he asked impatiently; and Julian without replying, took his departure, promising to return home and inform Mercedes of Lord Sylvester's arrival, and of his intention to be with her in a few hours.

He found Mercedes risen; she was very pake and had evidently been weeping. She change colour at his unexpected entrance, and the han she gave him trembled; nor were the tidings he bore likely to restore her to composure, although listened to with pleasure. So little was she able to resume her usual serenity, that Lord Sylvester was grieved to find that she received him with greater marks of distress than he had anticipated. He had trusted that time would, in a measure at least, have healed those cruel wounds which were so fresh and green when he had parted with her last, and though Julian had in the morning destroyed all those agreeable expectations which he had formed on hearing that she had found a home in Mrs. Wilmot's house, still he had hoped to find her soothed and tranquillised by the society of those who treated her with uniform kindness. Nor did he guess that the recent occurrences, with which he had been made acquainted, had occasioned this fresh distress of mind, and were in great part the cause of her present agitation. Mercedes was so much under the control of the thoughts which had tormented her throughout the night, that she could not refrain from making Lord Sylvester aware, in in the course of their conversation, of the plans which she had never relinquished, in spite of the kindness lavished on her in her present abode, and which she was now more than ever anxious to scomplish. She told him how desirous she was to find some means of self-support, some permaemployment ensuring future independence; and asked him if he could assist her in her search.

Lord Sylvester listened to her words with painful

concern, and with a serious air, promitake her desire into consideration, assuring his readiness to render her any service power.

Mercedes heard with pleasure the prome gave to see her frequently during his stay in don. Just as he was about to depart, Cecitered, and he was struck by the bright intel of her countenance, and the warm affection manner towards Mercedes. Pleased to d in her a near relative to the friendless orph delayed his departure for a short time after his duction to her, wishing to show by this att his cordial approbation of all who extended ness to one so much in need of, and so ing of it.

Lord Sylvester told Mrs. Wilmot as he away that he had engaged Julian to dine wi that evening; and when alone with his friend, (as he really desired to be, an therefore asked no one to join them), con cated to him what he had not been able to Mercedes, though he wished it to reach he He began by asking if he had heard of the of Mr. Annesly Marchmont.

"Oh yes," replied Wilmot, "it happen very long after the family left Rome. Did Do you know any thing of her at present? in some gay capital I suppose."

"She was in Paris all last winter. I know where she is now. Who do you supp one of her greatest friends?—Lady Sylveste

Lord Sylvester was much amused by the surprise with which Julian received this intelligence.

"What! I see that you would not have given either of them credit for such placability. You were, you may perceive, uncharitable. They are now as loving friends as they were bitter enemies. Now, with regard to Mrs. Annesly Marchmont, I will make no decision, but as to my step-mother, I really do not believe that she has a confirmed batted of any one—unless, indeed, it be myself. annot remember that she has ever been able to make me of use, to make me further her plans designedly or undesignedly, in any one instance, and therefore I believe that she does hate me. You must not forget that Mrs. Annesly Marchmont's present situation materially differs from her former one. Then, she could only mar Arundel's fortunes now she can make them; and the only pert of their whole arrangements that has caused me the slightest feeling of surprise is that she be consented to make them. She has engaged besself to Arundel. I confess that there I did her injustice, for I believed her too much of a coquette to do so."

Julian heard this information with indignation, but he scarcely apprehended that it would cost Mercedes any fresh pang to learn it. Lord Sylvester then told him of the intimation which Mercedes had given him of her intention of quitting his mother's home; but his subsequent attempts to convince Julian of the irrationality of the line of

conduct which he had so resolutely adopted, were as little effectual as those of Mrs. Wilmot had hitherto been; he therefore desisted, for, as we have often before shown, Lord Sylvester was or who never carried expostulation beyond a certain point. He then proceeded, without any very denite design, or idea of what would be the result the communication, to tell Julian that after the had parted in the morning, he had called on This friend, Lord --- who had recently received an appointment in India. He was a man of high reputation in matters of taste, and a liberal patron of the arts. Their conversation had turned on such topics; and he had started an idea of taking out with him to India, some young painter, disposed to enter on a new scene. He declared a generous intention to settle on him no insignificant stipend during his stay. While Lord Sylvester related this scheme. Julian listened with anxious attention, and made earnest inquiries into the perticulars of it. On hearing from his friend that he was going that very evening to an entertainment at Lord ---- 's house; he, without hesitation, entreated him to mention him as an artist willing to close with these terms; at least, if he considered him as qualified to accomplish Lord ----'s designs. Lord Sylvester heard this request with some surprise, but was on the whole disposed to comply. As there seemed to be no prospect of an union between Julian and Mercedes; he thought that an entire separation was advisable for the sale

of both, and he saw Mercedes, if Julian quitted England, provided with a safe retreat in the home of his mother. He was well aware that such a proposition as Lord ——'s, would be met by many candidates, and he therefore agreed to make an application without delay in behalf of his friend. He accordingly departed to execute his promise. Julian returned home, where he found Mercedes and his mother not yet retired to rest. They were engaged in earnest conversation, and the topic, on which they were discoursing, was the necessity for a speedy fulfilment of the designs which Mercedes had never abandoned. Julian could not refrain from declaring to them the probability of an occurrence, which must, he thought, accomplish his intention of putting such proceedings out of the question: and he concluded his disclosure in these words:

"Whatever, dearest mother, may be my inclination, I will not leave you for any time, unless Miss Ratcliffe will consent to make your home hers while I am absent;" and as he said these words, he was about to take Mercedes' hand, and place it in his mother's. During this speech, Mercedes' face had been turned aside, so that her hair concealed it from both Julian and his mother. At the moment that Julian's hand approached hers, she suddenly started, and rising, hastily crossed the room, as if to leave it. If such were her intention, she was forced to relinquish it; for her trembling limbs refused to support her to the door, and if Julian had not reached her side in time to catch

her fainting form, she would have fallen to the ground. The struggle of conflicting emotion and the force which she had put upon them denying them all outward expression, had prove too much for her strength; and the death-lisswoon into which she fell filled both her companions with alarm. Mrs. Wilmot in spite of I agitation, and in the midst of the haste we which she sought for every possible remedy, connot refrain from exclaiming to Julian with ang impatience:

"I believe that you have killed her!"

A glance at his pale countenance, and the spair of his attitude softened her anger, and called her pity.

"She revives," she exclaimed; "all will well," and at length, though not for a long whil poor Mercedes gave feeble signs of returning sens bility, and opened her eyes in all that perfect un consciousness of the past, that follows a suspen sion of life. That something had occurred which had totally changed the feelings of Julian toward her, she was made sensible by the impassione gaze with which his eyes met hers. She tume away her head, and a faint glow passed over be pallid cheek. At that moment, Mrs. Wilms remembered some invaluable remedy which flew to seek. Mercedes, over whose mind the whole train of past occurrences was beginning rush, covered her blushing face with her hands, a shrinking from Julian, exclaimed in a low voice earnest entreatv:

"Leave me, oh! leave me!"

"No, Mercedes," replied Julian, who was on his lines beside her. "Do not bid me leave you. Bid me never to leave you again. Forget all the Past, and let us live only from now. Do not tell such that you do not love me. I knew not how great was my misery, until this moment of happiness was vouchsafed me; relapse into your former coldness, and I feel that I shall die."

"Your misery!" said Mercedes with a bewildered air; "when have you been miserable?"

"From the day I first saw you. Ah! Mercedes, you do not know what it is to love, and to be without hope."

"Is it possible that you can have loved me?" asked Mercedes in increasing astonishment.

"Is it possible that you can have been ignorant of it? There was no time in which I did not love you. From the day you first entered my lonely apartment, you have presided over my every thought and action. There was no pursuit that I would not have abandoned, if by entering on another path I could have rendered you greater service. There was no sacrifice, from which I would have shrunk as too painful. Would I not have given you with my own hand to another? And now it is for you to banish me from my native country, and my mother's roof, if my presence be irksome and insupportable to you."

He paused as for an answer. Mercedes wept, as she replied:

"Why do you speak thus? Why do you deem me so ungrateful?"

"Oh! Mercedes," said Julian, in a voice of the deepest regret; "it is not gratitude that will suffice me. Give me your love, or give me nothing. Oh, Heavens! your spontaneous affection never can be mine; it has been another's."

At these words, Mercedes started up, as if in sharp pain:

"Julian," she exclaimed, "you treat me cruelly. Reject my love if you will, but you cannot doubt it. My secret has been extorted from me; if it be true that a heart that has been sorely tried is unworthy of you, leave me; and may time restore me to something resembling peace and tranquillity, and still these throbbings of agony!" she pressed her hands to her heart, as if to hold its beatings down. Julian, alarmed at her increasing paleness, and at the words she used, imploring her pardon and the permission to indulge in hope, however faint, at length allowed himself to feel "a sober certainty of waking bliss!"

## CHAPTER XVI.

# Chacun a son goût.

HE day following the eventful scene which we described at Mrs. Wilmot's, brought Lord ster and Cecilia there, and each was in turn ned of the total change which had taken in the views and intentions of those who the objects of their visits: a change which earnt by the first with unmixed satisfaction some surprise, and by the second with less ishment, and also with less pleasure: for a had begun to be alive to her friend's x, and to foresee the effect of her sharing e suspicions which she entertained of Jusecret passion. Not being able quite to cile herself to the consequences of such scovery being made by Mercedes, she had red an attempt to remove her from her pesituation. No sooner however did she how much the affections of Mercedes were engaged, and the misery from which she had relieved by Julian's avowal of his love, than feeling of disapprobation ceased. If Cecilia as it must be confessed that she did, to

<sup>. . .</sup> Castles wondrous rich and rare, Few castle builders could with her compare.



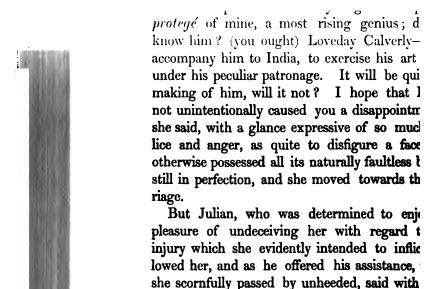
to be ill-grounded, soon brought her view into conformity with his. The warm interes he felt in Julian, made her believe that worthy to inspire such a sentiment; and that, sincere as was the sympathy between the character of her cousin and her own, many respects very opposite; she found he last able to conceive that Julian might every qualification for making the one though not the other.

Lord Sylvester, after expressing to Jul sincere congratulations, informed him the —— had listened favourably to his recomme of him, the previous evening, and that if resolved to decline the post which he had it was certainly his duty to do so without an

"By the bye," added Lord Sylvester, Julian aside, "whom do you think I met Quite an unexpected pleasure to both partie enemy of yours and no friend of mine. I h changed colour, and bit her lip rather maliciously. However, she bestowed on you all the commendations you could desire. Well, go now; but I am not quite sure that I would have you too hastily reject this offer altogether; for I think it is at least probable that, after a little more reflection you will come to a conviction that you have inflicted a great injury on Miss Ratcliffe's happiness, and ask my advice as to how you can undo all you have done, and place things once more on that very agreeable footing on which I found them."

In spite of this caution, Julian went to — House without any intention of reserving to himself the power of accompanying Lord — to the place of his destination. Though he arrived at an hour that was unfashionably early, a carriage was already there, on which he cast his eyes as he stood waiting for the door to be opened to him. He observed that the arms were those of a widow; and at that moment the door unclosed, and a lady stood before him, whom he recognized as Mrs. Annesly Marchmont. Starting back with a look of unequivocal delight, she exclaimed:

"Mr. Wilmot! of all people the one I most desired to see—here," she added, with a smile which so much resembled a sneer, that it warned Julian that the pleasure which she so openly dedered must spring from no kindly feeling. "I kope, however," continued the lady in the same surcastic strain, "that you came here with no very definite purpose; that you had nothing so cruel in view as to rob your native country of so much



dignity:

"Mrs. Annesly Marchmont, far from occing me any disappointment, has but relieve from some embarrassment: for as my purpose

is it caused her, alike impeded her speech, and is turned and left her before she could recover itiently to give vent to her anger, or to utter fresh threats for the future.

n his admission to an interview with Lord—, Wilfound it was even as Mrs. Annesly Marchmont said, and he came away resolved that he would favours of the great as seldom as possible. On return home he did not forget to relate this lent, which, explained by an account of all that occurred in Rome, possessed an interest for tearers; and Cecilia was the first to express by which all felt at the mortifying defeat which roud beauty had a second time sustained.

des' prospects; he was really glad to see her ung face wear an expression of happiness his daughter had never made him acd with the more magnificent visions in he had indulged, and certainly he had never any such himself. He had not given tought to the subject; and when he now quaintance with Lord Sylvester, and told a w much he liked what he read of his he did not express either regret or surregard to the indifference which had sted between him and Mercedes.

ed no new objection to his daughter's r he knew that though Mercedes was approtected and uncared for, still Julian



gaged in an attempt to fulfil the same purpother means. With this intent he soug same agent, Maxwell. The results of his the old clerk the next chapter shall disclose were important, and perhaps different from thing that our readers are expecting.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Within your soul a voice there lives,
It bids you hear the tale of woe—
When sinking low, the sufferer wan
Beholds no hand outstretched to save,
I've seen your breast with pity heave,
And therefore love I you, sweet Genevieve.
COLERIDGE.

CECILIA in her frequent visits to Mrs. Wilmot's louse, very often found Lord Sylvester there. Her frakness of disposition,

Where thought was speech, and speech was truth,

amused him; and he took an interest in remarking the striking contrast afforded by the two cousins, springing equally from difference of circumstances and opposition of character. He saw Cecilia's eagle eye sparkled with indignation whenever she approached the subject of Mercedes' wrongs; he discerned in her that ardour and generosity which made Beatrice wish "she were a man that she might eat the heart of the villain who corned her kinswoman!" Not even from him did she consent to veil her disdain of his mean relatives; nor conceal from him that the advantages of high birth and rank were become almost odious in her eyes; that she looked on their



awe, that she felt only contempt; and tha must prove that they possessed claims to i apart from their greatness, before she be disposed to pay it. All these sent were very exaggerated in Cecilia's mind; a manner in which, in conversation, she som gave expression to them, was much more so. impetuosity of her disposition led her freque go farther in words than in deeds, while a malice and spirit of contradiction incited magnify rather than to soften the opposition opinions to those of others. Any attempt cially made to induce her to modify her fit pression of them, always provoked her to re with a lively mockery which silenced reason it was easy to perceive that her boldest ass contained in them a germ of good sense, discrimination, and generous feeling.

One day when Cecilia came to see Me she found that she was cone out with Mrs V

interest, because intended by her cousin as a gift for herself. While she was thus engaged, Lord Sylvester was announced.

"Pardon me," he said, seeing that Cecilia was a little disconcerted by his unexpected entrance. "I wish to speak to Wilmot; and they tell me that he will return with his mother. Have I interrupted you?"

"Oh no," replied Cecilia, "pray come and look at this production of my cousin's. I hope that you will look to admire. I do not mean that you may not criticise also, for as it is still unfinished, Mercedes may profit by your remarks. It is for me. She has promised that it shall be ready for my birthday, which is not very distant."

And Cecilia's eyes sparkled with pleasure as she thought of all the secret, as well as the acknow-ledged happiness which she anticipated on that day.

"My thoughts have been much engaged on your cousin to-day, Miss Johnson," answered Lord Sylvester, "for I have just seen Mr. Maxwell."

Cecilia felt herself colour as Lord Sylvester consed speaking, though she could not imagine that be had any particular design in saying this to her. As she greatly desired to find out whether Maxwell had said any thing to pave the way to the discovery of the alteration in Mercedes' circumstances, she aked with some trepidation:

"Indeed! Why did he come to see you?"

"He did not come to see me. I went to see

him. In fact, I was very anxious to ascertai Miss Ratcliffe's affairs are arranged before he riage takes place, and I am particularly glad Johnson, to find you here, that I may be the to tell you what will relieve your mind a uneasiness on her account."

At these words Cecilia felt that it was is sible for her to remain where she was; her she was convinced, was betrayed by her conance. Starting up, with the drawing is hand, she walked to another part of the then conscious that this sudden token difference, with regard to what she had to must appear most unaccountable, she has quired what Maxwell had told him.

Lord Sylvester, without betraying any sup her sudden movements, replied:

"He tells me that no inconsiderable s money has unexpectedly come into his which, from the mode in which he has r it, he thinks himself quite justified in approp to the sole use of the orphan."

Here Cecilia felt convinced that the earn with which Lord Sylvester regarded her coube without a cause. The colour mounted cheeks, for she felt on the very brink of dis and yet she knew not how to assume that de surprise which would be the only emotion mexcited by such a disclosure. The agitation she strove in vain to master, produced effect which she could have desired to simul

is drove the colour from her cheek as quickly as it had called it there, and turning very pale, and being all power of supporting herself, she sank upon seat, murmuring faintly:

"Is this possible?"

The first look of surprise that she had seen on Lord Sylvester's countenance was painted there at this moment, and coming towards her, as if he had she would faint, he exclaimed:

"Yes, it is possible; but surely it is not possible that I am deceived in believing that the indeligence is no secret to Miss Johnson?"

"What!" exclaimed Cecilia, losing all self-command, and with eyes sparkling with indignation, "I have been betrayed!"

Then giving vent to her chagrin in an irrepressible flood of tears, she rose as if in haste to excape from the room. Lord Sylvester, seeing her intention, threw himself between her and the door, laying in a tone of entreaty:

"My dear Miss Johnson, pardon me, I entreat rou, if I have given you pain. Do not go without full explanation of all that has occurred. I must tet allow you to depart while you suppose that Mr. Maxwell has violated the secrecy you imposed. It that his ambiguous replies excited my sustainins; they fell first on your father. I pursued by inquiries, and found that I was wrong in my impositions, but I was not assured of what I now alieve, and rejoice in believing to be the case, stil I had seen you. And why should it trouble

you thus to find that I am, in spite of yours admitted into your confidence? Believe me y shall have no cause to regret it."

Cecilia, embarrassed, and not the less so for the earnest tone which Lord Sylvester had assume agitated and still displeased, listened to him is silence, and with averted looks. She allowed him however, to lead her back to the seat which all had so precipitately quitted. For a moment, Lor Sylvester was also silent, and when he spoke, he voice betrayed emotion.

"You shall have no cause to regret the know ledge I have now obtained," he said, "unless it I one to find how much the discovery of your not secret has strengthened a presumptuous wish the my heart has felt ever since my acquaintance wir Miss Johnson commenced, to gain an interest in he that should induce her not always to listen coldly the acknowledgment of the love and admiration which her character has inspired—a confession that I can longer refrain from making, be the consequence what they may."

Cecilia was so bewildered at this avowal from her noble suitor, for such he really was, so unall to conceive the possibility of its seriousness, and utterly at a loss to express the feeling of dress astonishment that came over her, making her agard the whole conversation as imaginary, a doubt the reality of all that had preceded the lawords of it, that, withdrawing the hand what Lord Sylvester still held, she could only excla

in accents of unfeigned astonishment, not unmingled with distress:

"What can you mean? Why do you speak to me thus?"

"What can I mean, dear Cecilia," replied Lord Sylvester, "but that I would fain have you know that my happiness is now wholly dependent on you? Banish me from your presence, cut short the brief intercourse which I have enjoyed with you, and you inflict the severest wound on it it has ever yet sustained. I learnt early in life that rank, and wealth, and high birth, will not purchase affection, though they may the semblance of it; but from you I fear no dissimulation. If you feel that you can make no return to the sincere and earnest love which an acquaintance with your noble character has won from me, you will tell me so, and I must be content to return to an apathetic existence; to indifferent eyes 'secure in guarded coldness' as before. That there is little in me to prepossess youth and beauty in my favour, I have not now to karn, nor need you fear to repeat a truth which never can be palatable, I own, but which shall be listened to with patient acquiescence. I have ventured thus to address you in the hope that during our acquaintance you may have made the same discovery (though not perhaps with the same pleasure that it has occasioned me) that there is a similarity in our thoughts and opinions, a sympathy in our tastes and feelings, that renders the happiness of each, in some measure surely, in the power

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of the other. I know that to you, Miss Johnson, I have little to offer that you esteem; that I have even much to ask you to forgive; for the little which other women covet, you perhaps will spurn. You will confound me with others on whom you bestow a well-merited contempt."

"No," exclaimed Cecilia, eagerly, "you know that it is impossible to confound you with those to whom you allude. You are well aware that even before I knew you, I had learnt to esteem, to admire, to approve—" she spoke with impetuosity, and stopped short in confusion.

"And now, Cecilia," said Lord Sylvester, "can you not learn also to love?"

Cecilia was really at a loss to give a very definite answer to this question; but though it would be difficult to repeat exactly what her words promised, we can safely say that they did not inspire Lord Sylvester with despair of her ever being able to accomplish the task which he proposed to her.

In fact, Cecilia had never for a moment contemplated the occurrence of such an event as the present; it had never suggested itself to her mind as possible that she should be selected to fill that rank which Mercedes, with all her beauty, had failed to attain. This uncoveted honour had never appeared to her as a toy within her reach, and she had not asked herself, while laughing at, or despising those who sought such gaudy prizes, whether they possessed any power of charming herself. But while Lord Sylvester spoke with an earnestness that

placed sincerity beyond a doubt, there had risen P before her in that brief space many thoughts, is the case in times of strong emotion) comessed into one moment of life. She became asible how it had grown to be the habit of her nd to recur, in every doubtful discussion, to the estion: what would be Lord Sylvester's decision, at would be his opinion—his feeling? In what nner would he view a subject? What line of iduct would be counsel, approve, or condemn? e felt that the answer to these, and similar inries had become to her a matter of deep import; t his opinions weighed much with her, that she s disposed to like as he liked, to condemn as Cecilia felt the conviction fast condemned. aling over her that the gift of Lord Sylvester's ection was a precious one, which, having once zived, she could never be content to resign.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

Benedetta la chiave che s'avvolse Al cor, e sciolse l'alma, e scossa l'ave Di catena sì grave È infiniti sospir del mio sen tolse.

PETRARCA.

THE discovery of Lord Sylvester's love w scarcely less surprising to Julian and to Merced than it had been to Cecilia herself, nor learnt with inferior pleasure. No outward token had hither revealed its existence, nor perhaps had Lor Sylvester been completely confirmed in his design of offering her his hand until he hand become acquainted with the generous intention with which her warm affection for her coust had inspired her. The charm with which this invested her was greatly heightened, as he attained a full conviction how sincerely she desired to maintain secrecy, and how unfeigned was the distress which she had felt on finding herself discovered even by him. True it is that the heart= of her father and her lover burnt within them to make her generosity known; but they had too sincere a respect for, and approbation of the principles which led her to impose silence on them, to break the injunction, either directly or indirectly. Mercedes and Julian were placed in possession of her wift

never throughout their lives did they learn the mane of the benefactor who bestowed it. All invines left them so wholly without premises to build non, that they were compelled to resign themwas to the tranquil enjoyment of the good which unexpectedly fell to their share, and to be connected to testify their gratitude to their unknown and only by the utterance of those heart-felt ayers which it dictated.

It was naturally gratifying to Mr. Johnson to see beloved daughter the choice of a man whose maracter laid claim to the highest esteem, and ho, actuated solely by his just appreciation of her cellent qualities, conferred on her a distinction hich, though not unduly prized, nor meanly courted by the worthy banker, was not without value and dignity in his eyes.

As for Mrs. Johnson, to Cecilia's great relief she was overwhelmed with astonishment, and so awed by her respect for Lord Sylvester's rank, that she was quite unable to pour forth those profuse acknowledgments of gratitude, and expressions of satisfaction and joy, which her daughter had anticipated with dread.

In the midst of the happiness which now perraded the little circle into which we have introduced
our readers, (and from which we design speedily to
allow them to retreat), there was one mind on
which a painful thought still crushed heavily. It
was Mercedes who could not expel the unwelcome
intruder. She silently considered how she might



her eyes from a book which she held, as h near, "you have said one cruel thing to me will go back to it and recall it now, that i never more come to grieve me. You said continued, regardless of his surprise, in a tremulous with emotion, "that my first, my taneous affection would never be yours, for been another's. You meant that Arund been the free choice of my heart, and that yo forced upon me by the cry of gratitude. I once tell you briefly my real sentiments of subject; and you will not doubt my word asked, appealingly.

"For Heaven's sake," said Julian, "spetthe shame of thus forcing you back to pair trospections, and that too by words spoker moment when I ought to have uttered o most fervent thanks. Pardon me, and proyou do so by silence."

e how my fancied love for Arundel was but a d and hurried dream; from the beginning to end, always without reality. I was a dupe, t of myself, as many are-nor even to him, as I ght have been. Lady Sylvester won my fondest ection by falsehood—she induced me to extend to Arundel by falsehood. She obtained it for n, much more than he did for himself; for by sehood she convinced me of his sincerity, and of earnestness, when his conduct made me doubt She made it appear pleasant to me, to bene her daughter. Her fascinating manners, the measurable distance which there seemed to be ween us; her cultivated grace, the perfect proety of her every action and word, the dignity of · self-possession, and the sweetness of her affaty; all these charms worked a most powerful Il. To think that her son sought me for his de filled my heart with pleasure, elated my uity, and blinded my reason. But the still small ce of truth would sometimes make itself heard. l I began to feel, before the veil was finally torn le, that when with Lord Sylvester and you, or h his mother alone, I enjoyed a happiness ich the presence of Arundel destroyed rather n enhanced. The antipathy that existed been you was visible to me, and I would occasionreproach myself with sparing too much of my e, and of my thoughts to pursuits and pleasures which Arundel would take no share. The unnowledged sense of this painful incongruity of

character and taste, began to weigh heave mind, and to quell my spirit. You saw the in me; I am sure that you did, for I reacconversation in which you alluded to it shunned the subject with an indefinite of shrank in dismay from it. Providence the veil which I had feared to lift: I reacher from that which I beheld. But ver you as yet read my feelings, if you have that I looked back with regret to the days sion. Many, many times have I been ca lift up my heart in gratitude to Heaven ings received:

> Evils turned to go: And wishings crossed, which I have seen fu Had led to the house of sorrow;

but never so much as for this, the crown ing of my lot, that I have been saved fro worth to be given to you."

While Mercedes had been speaking the her countenance had varied rapidly. He cheek told how she did violence to her time when, forced to speak for once the deep feelings of her inmost heart, she cast awhile the veil of reserve that hid them light; and her sparkling eyes had procled a brief moment (for the feeling that spot them lasted but so long) the indignant which she had banished for ever from her world's minion, who had for awhile enthem That gleam past, and as Julian's work

Il on her ear, her own nature, 'so delicately entle, soft, and pure,' resumed its reign; and hile she listened to entreaties that she would ever again strive to remove, doubts and fears that all uld never again recur, she buried her face in her ands to conceal both her blushes and her tears.

While Julian continued to speak, she made no swer; but a previous thought recurred to her, d removing her hands, she took the book which popen beside her, and giving it to him, pointed Il in silence to these lines:

To soothe thy sickness, watch thy health; Partake, but never waste thy wealth, Or stand with smiles, unmurmuring by And lighten half thy poverty—

Do all but close thy dying eye, And that I could not live to try:

To this alone my thoughts aspire, More can I give, or thou require?

er eyes continued to rest on the page after she t that Julian's had ceased to do so, and without ising them to meet his, she repeated the last line a low earnest voice of inquiry, upbraiding in its nderness.

Was Julian satisfied? Mercedes felt that he was.



Fate to virtue paid her debt,
And for their troubles bade them prove
A lengthened life of peace and love;
Time and tide had thus their sway,
Yielding like an April day,
Smiling noon for sullen morrow,
Years of joy for days of sorrow.

ROKEST

The only part of our task which now rer unfulfilled is to endeavour to furnish such info tion with respect to the future fortunes of whom we have introduced to our readers, as sufficiently answer all inquiries that they may disposed to make. May we also, without press tion, express a hope, perhaps an ill-grounded that our dénouement of a very long story have given general satisfaction? These page dismissed with a wish that none who weary it beginning will toil on to the end; and that t who reach the end will find no diminution of

placed at his command. Mercedes, endowed with understanding and with taste, that made his pursuits and his pleasures her own, shared the happiness which she conferred, and looked back without regret to the station from which she had fallen, and which was, in fact, in all but wealth, eventually more than regained by the success and distinction with which Wilmot's labours were crowned.

Mrs. Wilmot, in the happiness of her children, contemplated with satisfaction the result of her own unhesitating performance of a duty enjoined by grateful friendship, yet still of a nature so uncommon, that many would have considered themselves exempt from such a task. She could clearly trace back the origin of her son's good fortune to Mr. Ratcliffe's eager desire duly to discharge his obligations to her. It was his liberality that had first opened to Julian the career which he had so successfully run.

Lord Sylvester's acquaintance, and even friends, were undoubtedly greatly amazed at his choice of a wife having delayed so long to choose any; nor did their amazement quickly subside when first they saw and knew Cecilia. When they compared Mercedes, such as she had been when Lady Sylvester originally introduced her into their coterie, distinguished alike for the brilliancy of her beauty and the reputation of her immense wealth, with her cousin, who was but moderately endowed with either, they were at a loss to conceive why the heart of Lord Sylvester had resisted the charms of

the one, and yielded to those of the other. Had however, found the expectations which he had formed, fully realized in the development of the noble character of his wife. It was his delight to watch its progress, to check her impetuosity, and curb her rashness, while he gave full scope to all her generous impulses; and placing no restraint beyond what was due on her liberality, he rejoiced in beholding her adored by the poor and the afflicted, as a guardian angel whose mission on earth was the relief of their necessities.

Cecilia, whose affectionate and susceptible nature caused her to be much influenced by those with whom she lived, lost all her wilfulness when she experienced only tenderness. Believing that she might rely implicitly on the undeviating principles and excellent judgment of her husband, she laid aside all rash confidence in herself, and that hasty presumption in opinion and in action, which had originated in the little deference she had felt to be due to those who had formerly surrounded her. When made acquainted with all whom Lord Sylvester honoured as friends, she recognized, and confessed with candour, that the virtues of truth, meekness, humility, and self-denial, may be discr vered among those who yet are graced with high birth, rank, beauty, and wealth, and who are called on to occupy the most splendid positions.

It was the fate of Arundel Wentworth never to be united to Mrs. Annesly Marchmont; and yet, if he ever felt an emotion worthy of the name of

my one but himself, it was for her. When assured that Lord Sylvester was absolutely marry, a probability which she had never ated, she hastened to discard Arundel. She nd a plausible pretext for so doing. She I broke off her friendship with his mother; afterwards declared, and found her debelieved, that the tempers of both and son were so insupportably haughty, L, and insolent, that she could not continue Mrs. Annesly Marchmont it to them. means highly born, and had been destiny other means of acquiring distinction remarkable loveliness which she un-By marrying an old and possessed. hypochondriac, she had attained her first vealth; by a second union she was rewin what she next coveted, rank. that Wentworth was stripped of all proscoronet, he became as contemptible in as a knowledge of his real character had him in those of Mercedes. Mrs. Anrchmont sustained no defeat in the present her pursuit. She marrried Lord ----, m we have shewn her exercising sufficient to make him retract a given promise in comply with her solicitations. She accomm to India, where, in her eastern court, with that despotic sway which was so de-Her reign was however brief; for ) her.

Lord —— did not long retain possession of that office to which she owed her power; nor did has sufficiently distinguish himself in the performance of his duties to be entrusted with any similar one again.

Arundel Wentworth eventually won the hand a rich heiress, who, young, unprotected, and scarcely emancipated from the rigours of the school-room, thoughtlessly bestowed it on the first suitor with a pleasing exterior and agreeable manners who asked it. She quickly repented her unwise decision; for Wentworth, resenting his desertion by the only woman whom he had ever loved, (as he said) and detesting the one whom he had sought and won, adopted the character of a reckless and disappointed man, considering himself, by so doing, as privileged to treat his wife with total disregard, and to abuse the confidence which she had reposed in him. His wild extravagance, and a fatal propensity for gambling which he soon manifested, dissipated her wealth, and finally plunged him into disgrace, which compelled him to absent himself from his native land. He selected Paris as his place of refuge. There his mother, also, had taken up her abode. Reduced to defray her expenses by her own slender means, she preferred a residence on the continent to one in England, as the expedients by which alone she was enabled to procure the luxuries and the amusements which were indispensable to her, appeared less degrading when practised not immediately under the eyes of her

former associates. Mrs. Arundel Wentworth returned to her own family to await the time when her husband's affairs might be more creditably managed. Happily for her, an early death released her from a pitiable lot. Lady Sylvester and her son lived to add fresh examples to the many that had gone before them, that a youth of frivolity, selfishness, and vanity, is usually succeeded by an old age equally destitute of all qualities that can command reverence, or win affection.



### THIS TALE

IS INSCRIBED TO

# MY SISTER.

For thee,—my own sweet sister—in thy heart I know myself secure, as thou in mine. We were and are—I am even as thou art—Beings who ne'er each other can resign. It is the same—together or apart—From life's commencement to its slow decline, We are entwined.

BYRON.



# CONTRITION.

# PART I.

Nought is there under Heaven's wide hollownesse That moves more dear compassion of the minde Than beauty brought to unworthy wretchednesse, By envie's snares, or fortune's freaks unkinde.

SPENSER.



# CONTRITION.

#### CHAPTER I.

One dyes in the bud, and another in the bloome; some in the fruite; few, like the sheafe, that come to the barne in a full age.

Man cares not so much for life as for that which steals it away—pleasure.

OWEN PELTHAM'S RESOLVES.

How omnipotent is Death! How mighty is his arm! What strength can defy it? How exensive is his sway! What realm is uninvaded? Can the proud hero, who slays his thousands and his tens of thousands, compete with him? The most ruthless exterminator of the human race, the nost insatiable seeker of the blood of his fellow-men, while triumphantly usurping his sceptre, must sink meath his touch, and join with their victims in cknowledging his supreme dominion.

Not an hour passes that finds him idle! In his brief moment how many expiring wretches, n every part of the globe are joining the kingdom f the dead! How many departing, exulting nd despairing souls are ascending to the judgmentant!

How profound a lesson might we learn could we behold but a few of those scenes of death that are now enacting even while we write!

Many the shapes
Of death, many are the ways that lead
To his grim cave—all dismal:
Some, by violent stroke shall die—
By fire, flood, famine; by intemperance, more.

All maladies

Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-sick agony. All fev'rous kinds—
Demoniac phrenzy, moping melancholy.
Dire the tossing, deep the groans;
And over them triumphant Death his dart shake.

But the lessons afforded in the chambers of death would not be taught by the dying only. From the attendants in those apartments we should quickly learn some of the saddest secrets of humanity. Unmasked by the force of passion, or startled by unlooked-for events into casting aside the veil of caution or dissimulation, they would suffer us to read the human heart as it is not to be read in any other page of its history. We might 'gain our experience, and our experience would make us sad,' and we should be naturally led to imagine that there the proud man would cease to feel pride, and the worldly man to covet the world's goods.

Yet, though death be surely an awful thing, it cannot overcome the cares of life. The grasping heir, the hungry kinsman, and the cringing sycophant, do not grow less greedy when they have

air eyes the evidence of the nothingness. They watch beside the sick man's bed nxiety to snatch his possessions from his asp, which they had not hitherto dared to it which now they scarcely refrain from owing.

chambers of the dying how many tears! Tears of love and of hate; tears of of rage; tears of sympathy; tears of tment; feigned tears, and the natural gs of a pierced heart! The tears of the for whom it is good to be afflicted, and of the natural man, who mourns at first o will not be comforted, and straightways and forgets all serious thought amid the even the pleasures, or even the idle, per- Il diversions of the world!

larnarmon watched beside the death-bed dest son; and like David, he wept and like the sickness threatened, but life and ained; and like David, he ceased to weep when they were gone, and the heir of on, in spite of his efforts, was borne to abode whence none return. But very were the feelings of the fathers' hearts; tent the clue to their conduct. We do not his anguish ceased with his son's death; but in spite of the heavy affliction e had dispensed to him, Lord Llarnarmon Lord Llarnarmon; and the first tide of med, he returned to his old views, his

old meditations, to indulge the same passions, and to foster the same plans. Ambition had through life been his grand aim, and his eldest son had been the idol, not of his affections, but of his ambition; so that when he ceased to exist, on the abatement of a little natural grief, his thoughts wholly turned towards finding another similar instrument for the execution of his designs. Such he knew existed, though he scarcely knew where at the present mo-To what part of the globe had his harsh indifference allowed his only surviving child to wander, hitherto neglected, despised, scarcely even recognized? Now, having become necessary to the accomplishment of his cherished designs for the aggrandizement of his family, he was to be immediately sought for, and summoned to a home which for him had not hitherto even borne that name.

Of his two children, the eldest had been endeared to Lord Llarnarmon, not only by position, but also by character. Of a high and daring spirit, enterprising, haughty, and overbearing, easily imbibing his father's maxim, that all things were to be subservient to his will, the selfishness inherent in his nature was brought to an early maturity by the fostering care bestowed upon it; and it was only the impetuosity of youth which rendered him more desirous than was Lord Llarnarmon to unite the pursuits of pleasure with those of interest. His father, who encouraged his presumption, was willing that he should have individual pursuits that might prevent his interference

th his own plans, designed it is true for their atual advantage, but in which he wished him to concerned only when he became necessary to air execution.

With regard to the other child, born shortly bee his mother's death, he was of a sickly constiion, the infirmities of which greatly aggravated natural nervous timidity of temperament, and we him in the eves of his father, and of all who I not care to soothe him by gentleness into conence, an appearance of imbecility which did him Had he possessed half his broeat injustice. er's self-confidence, his capacity would have abled him to outstrip him far in every mental quirement; but owing to the comparative unportance of his station, and the terror the poor ald felt, and could not conceal in the presence of s father, Lord Llarnarmon commonly treated him th a neglect of which he was not too young to al the indignity; while by his hesitation, his tears, s burning blushes, when his father addressed him stily, instead of moving compassion, the boy ly provoked additional severity and impatience.

When Eustace had reached his tenth year, his her meeting with a friend who was about to trust the education of his son to a Swiss clergy-an residing at Lausanne (a man of much erudin and respectable character, with whom this genman had been connected in early life) who was lling to undertake the task for a remuneration, fling in comparison to that bestowed for such



all its affection on poor Eustace, was a which he had been permitted to call esp own, principally because it was a posses no one else coveted. This had been his c fellow and friend, and was rarely notic brother Vincent, but by a kick or a cuff. morning of his departure, Dash was co ensconced in the corner of the carriage th convey his master from his father's cast Mordaunt's house. After receiving the embraces of his father and brother, wit saddened he scarce knew why, Eustace st the carriage where Dash received him w rent of caresses. Alas! poor Dash! w you not remain tranquil only a few minut till the park gates were past, and you v with your master? His noisy transport the notice of Vincent, who was lingering door; in a sudden fit of passion, such never resisted by his father's menials

master, who scarcely heard, and did not at all regard the eloquence of his brother's supplications. The carriage door was closed, and as it rolled away, Eustace shrank back into a corner, and shed the bitterest of all the bitter tears that had ever trickled down his infant cheek.

The next six years of Eustace's life were the happiest, for they were the most tranquil of his existence. M. De la Broche did not neglect his duty to the two boys; but after instilling a due quantity of learning into their minds, and devoting a fair portion of his time to them, was very red to sink back into his ordinary state of literary abstraction, and allowed them to find their own diversions and employments. These they principally sought in pedestrian excursions among the mountains; and incited by a spirit of adventure and of emulation, they braved many a danger, and despised many a hardship. Under this healthy discipline, the feeble Eustace gradually improved in tength and spirits. Unfortunately for him in all these respects, with reference to mind as well as body, he was after a three years' residence depived of his young companion, and no other came to fill his place. He still remembered home with too much dread to feel any wish to return thither. Though he was grieved at Mordaunt's departure, the shyness and reserve of his disposition prevented him from seeking any other companion of his own age to supply his place. He found that in silence and in solitude his imagination could

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epict for him scenes of romance and interest on epict for nim scenes of romance and mercs of on the delight, the anythich he dwelt with far more delight, the which he derived from the realities of line see. ne nad ever yet derived moin the realists of the the These pleasures were greatly enhanced by nese pressures were greamy curametry by Among the sublime renature of his rambles. gions which he trod, his spirit was fed by all the gious willou no trous, the solitary contemple. tion of nature seldom fails to excite.

Thus did Eustace while away his time, in the contemplation of the mazy webs his fancy wove; such was his principal occupation when childhood and boyhood had passed away, and manhood was fast approaching. When he was about sixteen, friend of Lord Llarnarmon, passing through Lar sanne, came to see him; and this gentleman on hi return to England ventured to point out to t father of the boy, the unfairness of leaving b there, without bringing him into an active sp of life, and affording him the common advant of his station. Soon after this hint, Lord Lie mon wrote to M. De la Broche, that he had intention of procuring a commission in the for Eustace, and thought it necessary to into the present state of his health, wh been so sickly in his childhood, previ making any definite arrangement with him.

The kind old Frenchman heartily con the dismay with which this letter Eustace; but before he could dispatch tulatory reply which he meditated, he

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with a sudden illness, of which he expired in a few days. Such was the nervous horror with which Eustace still regarded the home of his childhood, that he summoned up resolution sufficient to write to his father on this event, entreating permission to prolong his stay on the continent, and extend his survey of it, at least while he was undetermined as to what his future career should be. He also ventured to urge a request that he would not be precipitate in selecting the military profession for one whom feeble health and secluded habits rendered so peculiarly unfitted for it.

To this letter, Eustace obtained no answer; but at the end of the half year which was at hand, on applying to his father's banker for the customary remittance of his allowance, he received the information that Lord Llarnarmon had given directions for it to be paid as usual; and a message that, wherever he went, he was to leave information at to the means of communicating with him at the bank. Lord Llarnarmon, though he did not condescend to take any notice of his son's request, had complied with it without reluctance; for being at that time in need of ready money, and his eldest son having run into much extravagance at college, he was willing rather to leave Eustace to himself. with the small allowance he had hitherto given him, than by recalling him home, to incur any immediate expense in consequence of the measure.

Two years had now elapsed since this tacit permission had been given, and during that period

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#### CONTRITION.

Messrs. Millingham and Co. had been trou no inquiries, either from father or son; had been required from them but the tr sion of one letter committed to their che Mordaunt, Eustace's early friend, who wentering into the Church.

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### CHAPTER II.

Dost thou spurn the humble vale?
Life's proud summits wouldest thou scale?
Check thy climbing step elate,
Evils lurk in felon wait;
Dangers, eagle pinioned, bold,
Soar around each cliffy hold,
While cheerful peace, with linnet song
Chants the lowly dells among.

BURNS.

ACCORDINGLY, Lord Llarnarmon's first act was to inquire where his son was at present to be found; and on learning from his banker, that his last remittance had been made as usual to Lausanne. he without loss of time dispatched thither a confidential servant, who was less ignorant of his real intentions and secret designs, than any other person connected with him. One of the projects most dearly cherished by Lord Llarnarmon, and frustrated by his son's death, was the union of Vincent to the sister of a man whose character and interest stood so high in the esteem of the political party to which Lord Llarnarmon had allied himself, as to render so intimate a connection with him an object well worthy of his ambition. But great as was Lord Sanville's power and influence, his private fortune was very inadequate to his many calls or it; he was therefore constrained to leave his siste destitute of any sufficient provision, and almodependent on their mother, who found in the name rowness of her jointure a ceaseless subject of complaint and lamentation. The negociation whi was entered into by the heads of the families, therefore equally pleasing to each; and received unhesitating acquiescence of the two persons most nearly concerned. Mr. De Glynne was ver willing that his father should be at the sole pains of transacting such an affair for him, and the proposal suited well the ambitious character of the Lady Theodora Vallenden. Lord Llarnarmon was never known to abandon a project once formed; and in reply to the very letter of condolence which he received from his friend. Lord Sanville, he wrote another in which he suggested, that Llarnamon was not without an heir, and expressed a wish (almost pathetically) that all might remain on the same footing between the two families.

But how had Eustace, once so insignificant, now of so much importance, employed the uncontrolled independence of which his father's neglect or forget-fulness, had given him possession? In spite of weakness and indecision, Eustace was not without high aspirations; he cherished vague ideas of a time to come when he should

Scorn repose, and live laborious days, conquer even that timidity which enslaved him, and emerge from obscurity, prepared to play a hero's Part. He dreamt dreams of ambition, which he had not vigour enough to attempt to realise, and formed plans of action which he was too infirm of Purpose to execute.

At length, in some measure arousing himself from this moody idleness, he resolved to pass the remaining part of the first summer, after the death of his old preceptor, in visiting those parts of Switzerland which were least commonly explored; and then passing over into Italy, from thence to write to his father, in order to ascertain his future fortunes.

In one of these mountain excursions, in which the fresh beauties of nature afforded him unmitigated pleasure, and really solaced his uneasy mind, Eustace met with an accident which would probably have cost him his life, had not the timely interposition of a friendly hand rescued him from danger when he was no longer able to assist himself. He had in his walk been tempted to quit the beaten track, in hopes to trace to its source a brightly sparkling streamlet which had all the day enchanted him by the gambols it had played in its devious course. As new beauties opened on his eyes with every onward step, he congratulated himself on having fallen on such a path, and, though evening was approaching, felt an irresistible impulse to continue to toil upwards, hoping to be rewarded by a glorious prospect of the departing orb of day from the height which he aspired to mount.

But now he found that the difficulties of the way were becoming almost insurmountable, and fatigue began to damp the ardour with which encountered them at first, he paused, and leaning on his Alpenstock, looked around to discover some easier mode of accomplishing his design. What so doing, he had but carelessly planted the straff on which he leant; the turf into which he had struck it gave way; it glanced off the smooth surface of a rock which was only thinly covered with verdure, and Eustace was precipitated with violence to the ground. The bushes against which he fell offered but a feeble resistance, and he continued to make a rapid descent of many yards among rocks and briars. With a desperate struggle (for it was for life) he caught with his outstretched arm the stem of a young tree, strong enough to yield him support, and to check his fall so as to enable him to regain his footing, but at the same time so pliant, that it bent with his weight, and dragging his arm over the rough stones that lay about its roots, lacerated the flesh in a most painful manner. Stunned and bruised as he was, and smarting with the pain of his wound, it was some minutes before he was fully alive to the hopelessness of his condition. Without any staff or prop, for his Alpenstock had fallen far beyond his reach, scarcely able to stand, as he found himself on first attempting to do so, and yet on a spot that it might have baffled the dexterity of the most active chamois hunter to scale. Eustace felt unable to assist himif, and also believed that he was quite out of the ach of aid. Under this terrible impression, he nk again upon the ground, and covering his face th his hands, strove to collect his senses and prere to die.

At that moment he heard a human voice, nor as it very remote. Nerved by despair, he uttered loud and piercing shout, and it was answered. fter the lapse of a few moments, he was able to escry the figure of a man habited as a huntsman, escending warily and slowly to the ground he occupied. His deliverer, who was young and obust, approached him with a kind and cheerful men, and addressing him in the Swiss French (with which Eustace was of course perfectly conversant) wisted him to rise, and grasping one of his hands werfully, conducted him onward over heights which rendered his head dizzy, and made his heart icken, though perhaps the stupor occasioned by is late shock rendered him less susceptible to than he would have been otherwise, for he was carcely alive to his danger. Following his brave ad hardy guide implicitly, they exchanged no ords until they had descended from their perilous oution, when the young mountaineer bid him ace himself on the emerald bank of turf that they nd reached, and quaff from his hunting-flask a aught that revived his nearly exhausted vigour. 7ith fresh water from the stream that was here wing tranquilly beside them, he bathed his

bruised and swollen arm, and taking a scarf from round his waist, made him wear it as a sling. After all these kind exertions in his behalf, addressed him in a tone at once frank and tendessaying:

"Now, Monsieur, do you find yourself bet able to proceed? If so, I will conduct you to house of our good pastor, where I promise you that you shall pass the night with comfort; and to-morrow I hope we shall find you little the worse for your downfal on our mountain to-day."

"And does your pastor then willingly bestow his hospitality on every wandering stranger?"

"Most willingly. He is indeed an excellent man, and besides that, he loves to show compassion and to render services. I think he delights in the face of a stranger; a very rare sight here, I assure you."

"Is he an old man?"

"Very old; but still in as complete possession of his faculties as in his greenest years. He did not always live amongst us; he went away even so far as Paris, I believe; certainly beyond Genera, and from thence he has brought away such learning as can never find its match here. This perhaps is one reason why strangers, especially foreigners, are so welcome to him; for he has no companions, scarcely any pupils, though even those would satisfy him, I believe; and indeed if he did not insist on Mademoiselle Claudine learning with

him in all the great books he studies, I think he would seldom speak from one year's end to another."

"Indeed; and who is Mademoiselle Claudine? His sister?"

"No," replied his communicative friend, with a hearty laugh, " no, indeed. She is his grand-child. Poor old man, how he dotes upon her! Once, not long after he first came hither, he had a letter, (he never has any now), and we think it told him that his child was dead, for his heart seemed well nigh broken; his hair was not white then as it is now, and though he loved his books, yet he loved a merry jest, and a social circle also. Well, he set out, and we did not see him again for a month. When he returned to us, his mourning habit could not tell us more plainly that he had known sorrow than did his pale mild face, and his altered voice. He brought with him a child so lovely as to win the hearts of all who saw her, and she seemed the only solace our dear old pastor now possessed. But we are come in sight of M. Chénier's house, and will run on rather faster than you may be inclined to follow, to give him notice of our ap-Proach."

So saying, he hurried on, leaving poor Eustace, bruised and smarting as he was, heartily rejoiced at the happy prospect of a termination to the labour and danger of the day.

Before he could reach the house, he perceived his friendly guide returning towards him, followed by

an old man, apparently feeble and infirm; but no sooner did he arrive near enough for him to sooner did he arrive near enough for him to sooner did he arrive near enough for him to soone his countenance, than he perceived that the fire of his dark eye was yet unquenched, and that the lines on his brow seemed rather the furrows of deep thought and past sorrows, than the wrinkles of time alone. His voice too, which he raised to welcome him, was still clear and unbroken, and the cordiality, with which he received him, possessed all the charm of the most refined good breeding. Touched by compassion, which Eustace was a fit object to inspire, the worthy man hastened to welcome him to his roof, and to prepare for him every accommodation which it afforded.

In this task he was assisted by a young and very lovely girl, in whom Eustace discovered Claudine. Never before had he beheld such angelic beauty as then he gazed on. Ill at ease as he was, worn and weary, and conscious that he himself was not in a plight to charm the eyes of any beholder, he could not turn his looks from her, nor even attend to the friendly observations of his host, nor partake with any appetite of the plentiful repast which his sylph-like attendant hastened to provide with a promptitude that waited not to be bidden.

Having completed the preparations for their evening meal, she and her grandfather, and the honest guide who had conducted Eustace thither, approached to partake of it, and the evening closed with pious prayer and praise offered up

Chénier in a voice so fervent and so solemn, to leave Eustace greatly impressed with the presiding angel. Above all was he touched presiding angel. Above all was he touched very from imminent peril, introduced by the enerable pastor, and heartily responded to by its auditors.

## CHAPTER III.

La violetta
Che nell' erbetta
S'apre al matin novella,
Di', non è cosa
Tutta odorosa,
Tutta leggiadra e bella?

CHIABRERA.

Her beauty is exquisite; her favour infinite:
Her love sincere, her thoughts immaculate;
Her tears pure messengers sent from her heart;
Her heart as far from fraud as heaven from earth.

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

EVEN when retired to the small and deally chamber to which his host conducted him, Eustace, though greatly wearied, could not banish from his mind the events of the day. No sooner did sleep promise to soothe his excited spirits, than some wild vision would cause him to dart from his slumbers. Sometimes he trod the brink of precipices more appalling than those from which he had been snatched; sometimes Claudine was his guardian angel, and rendered him services a thousand times more perilous than those he had received at the hands of Louis. Fatigue, however, at length banished these visions, and he fell into a heavy slumber from which he sprang up refreshed, when

igaged, gathering fruit and flowers; and was more than ever struck with her beauty. Never did poet or painter so the ideal charms of Aurora, as to embeauty to those who heard or viewed luce of their imagination half so vividly the glowing radiant loveliness of this On her countenance 'il lampeggiar elico riso,' was the most enchanting beam ness that mortal countenance ever reflected: mile as might have rested on a cherub's en contemplating the bliss of Paradise! uriant hair fell in a profusion of waving n her neck and shoulders, and was of a vn colour, burnished and glittering, as if a dust had been sprinkled over it. Around th was diffused a bland expression, bethe tenderest sensibility, and the most guilessness. Peace was enthroned on her nooth brow: and Eve. before the fall, with-

pearance by his night's rest, would not for a moment permit him to propose quitting his roof so speedily. In fact, the presence of the few stray guests, who chanced to cross his threshold, was, (as Louis had said) far too acceptable for him, to find him ready soon to relinquish their society. Eustace quickly perceived that he was a man whose favourite pursuit and pleasure was literature. His acquirements, particularly his classical erudition, were great, and of course quite unparalleled in the humble sphere in which he moved. Indeed, his whole demeanour strongly recalled to Eustace's mind, the character depicted by Sir Thomas More in these words: 'In his face did shine such as amiable reverence as was pleasant to behold: Gentle in communication, yet earnest and sage;' in his speech he was fine, eloquent, and pithy. mild and benevolent expression of his countenance seemed to say that all his natural sagacity had not been employed in the acquisition of worldly knowledge, nor sharpened by the study of his fellowmen in the busy haunts of life; but, passing his days in meditative retirement, almost in solitude he had talked much with God and nature, and little with the perverted sons of men. Chénia had indeed 'been tumbled and tossed in the waves of divers misfortunes and adversities, and had learned the experience of the world, which being so learned, cannot easily be forgotten.' But from the indulgence of his simple, peaceful tastes, and from the ardent affection subsisting between himself and his grandchild, he had derived as much

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nappiness as often falls to the share of mortals. One of the greatest of those casual pleasures which come to cheer us all at intervals, (though it nust needs be confessed that to some they come out seldom) was intercourse with men capable of entering into his favourite pursuits; and the gratitude which his hospitality seldom failed to excite in those, towards whom it was exercised often induced them to offer to his acceptance some of the precious volumes which had formed, perhaps, the subject of their conversations, and to place in his possession works too modern otherwise to have reached his library. Delighted to find that Eustace's acquirements in some respects even rivalled his own, he naturally strove to detain him; and during the few days he spent with them, it was equally natural that the charms of a handsome person, the peculiar gentleness of his voice and manner, the intelligence of his countenance, the enthusiastic spirit of romance, that embued all his conversation, should render him singularly fascinating to the young and inexperienced Claudine, and induce her inwardly to believe that she 'might call him a thing divine, for nothing natural she ever saw so noble.'

Another, perhaps, even more powerful instrument of interest with Claudine, was the profound melancholy that seemed to overshadow him, betraying, (at least, so Claudine read it) the existence of some secret grief 'stealing the brightness of his life away.' Here she felt that her sympathy might be valuable, though her inferiority lect might render her incapable of sharing thoughts; she could surely share his sorro

Eustace left them, with often repeated pro a speedy return. All their former pleasure to languish during his absence. Chénier's were pursued with less zest; Claudine longer the happy Claudine the stranger h Those two days seemed rather year influence they had exerted on her charac heart was changed, and for her the enjoy the careless felicity of childhood was for ev Now it was that Claudine first felt was motherless. In vain she sought, hal proachfully and half in dread, to find an tion of this strange revolution in all her She was baffled by her own heart: the prayers that she had been accustomed to from her infancy, no longer seemed to spe She sank despondently on her ki with a gush of tears added an earnest sup that the lot of the stranger might be hap blessings might ever be showered on him, a though perhaps she might never see him: might sometimes in the midst of them thi Somewhat soothed by having the vent to her feelings, she strove to resume tomary placidity, and to return to her us pations.

## CHAPTER IV.

I leave myself, my friends, and all, for love.

Those hast metamorphosed me;

Made me neglect my studies, lose my time,

War with good counsel, set the world at nought.

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA.

Sure the last end
Of the good man is Peace! How calm his exit!
Night dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary, worn out winds expire so soft.
By unperceived degrees he wears away.

BLAIR'S GRAVE.

EUSTACE returned speedily, and from that day is visits were frequent. In a very short time he came an inmate of the house, and sending for is books from Lausanne, incorporated them in hénier's library. Claudine, whose assiduity as a upil had chiefly been exercised to gratify her randfather, now quietly ceded her place to one so ell qualified to fill it. Not that she forsook their ciety, nor sought for livelier occupations to relace those she relinquished; she was well content o sit beside them, looking from the face of one to nat of the other, with a timid, tender gaze, that seemed to say, that there she was happy, because nere was all she loved. Whatever were the words hat fell from their lips, they were to her most

musical; whatever the subject that engrossed their thoughts, to her it was invested with interest. The gentleness of her nature did not weaken the intensity of her feelings; and the delicate fragility of her form clearly showed how little able she would be to contend with sorrow or neglect. She had ever been l'enfant chérie of Chénier's heart, and it was necessary to her existence to be so.

Claudine quickly grew to love Eustace. He was to her all that Ferdinand was to Miranda: and though Eustace met with none of the affected churlishness of Prospero, he needed no further stimulus to love than he derived from her exceeding beauty, and tenderness, and grace. If difficulties increase love, sufficient existed here w do so, though they sprang not from Chénier not Claudine. Awed as he was by his knowledge of his father, Eustace was at a loss how to proceed To write to him an account of the deep and earnest feelings excited in his breast by this love child of nature, he deemed absolute madness; vet, when he dwelt on the indifference and total neglect which he had so long experienced, imagined that any decision he could make with regard to himself, would excite too little interest to call forth opposition.

Wavering as these fluctuations of thought had made him, from the time of the visit to Chénial abode, Eustace, though scarcely with a definite motive for such a proceeding, had avoided giving his real name of De Glynne to his newly-made

friend, and had even employed that of Fenton, which his mother had borne, and himself also.

One evening while he was fondly and vainly musing on his hopeless passion, a plan suggested itself to him, which he determined to adopt. He would write to Mordaunt, a friend from whom he had always received the most sincere advice, and appealing to him would entreat his mediation with Lord Llarnarmon, if he thought it would be availing. A vague idea floated across his mind that, for Claudine's sake, and for the continuance of a life of so much happiness—for

Innocence, with angel smile, Simplicity that knows no guile, And love and peace were there—

if he received a reply unfavourable to his hopes from Mordaunt, he would, without revealing any of his proceedings to his father, espouse her under the same which he rejoiced in having assumed, and Now the place of his residence and every circumstance of his existence to remain utterly unknown to all his neglectful relations, nor ever emerge from bis chosen obscurity, unless called on most imperatively to do so by some unforeseen occurrence. Daiving more satisfaction from this idea than he had known since he had first seen Claudine, he immediately dispatched the letter to Mordaunt. Having done this, he seemed to forget that he had ever designed to await its results; and before any enswer could arrive, he had told Claudine that he byed her; he had learned that her heart was wholly



designed his fair child for Æneas, the illus stranger, and for none other, read the pa aloud to Eustace, ending it by saying:

"And now the fair Lavinia is yours; but is here no Turnus to be conquered."

Eustace thought at that moment, that i gloom that overcast the usually frank and brow of Louis (who had shared their repas read the secret of a rival; and he rejoiced t had snatched his beautiful betrothed from a deemed so unworthy of her.

Before long, Mordaunt's reply arrived; and its inauspicious tone, Eustace again applaude self for the caution that had prevented the sure of his real name and position from Ch and the following day saw him the joyful groom of the beautiful Claudine.

Months passed on, and Eustace had passed in happiness and rejoicing; but was he so trengthening it: unavailing regret, weak repining, were ready to betray themselves, but for one check hat awed them into silence. Unsuspicious and unteachable in worldly things' as was Claude Chénier, his character was marked by a placid dignity and unswerving rectitude, and a calm, unerring sense of what was due to himself and to others, that inspired a respect too much tempered by love to degenerate into fear in all around him. Over the mind of Eustace he possessed almost unconsciously somewhat of the same influence as that exercised by his father; a power of bringing him into subjection by his superior strength of mind; so that, while he lived, Claudine's interests were secure.

Inconstancy was a feature in Eustace's character. When first he saw Claudine she awakened the most passionate love; her extreme loveliness, her infantine simplicity and grace, touched his heart irresistibly. Yielding to these charms, all other considerations had been without weight; but ever unable to cast off the early yoke imposed on his childhood, a dread of his father's stern authority. though prepared to despise the manifest evils of his course in forming this obscure alliance, he could not prepare himself to brave resentment; and it was only the security of secresy that emboldened him to carry into effect a project he had not strength of mind either to relinquish or avow. Clauding, in truth, was totally unfitted by nature and education to be his wife. Her mind and temper were equally

unsuited to assimilate with his. In the first, alm a child in years and knowledge, she was with doubt painfully his inferior; with respect to second, her very mildness and docility incapacits her from exercising the slightest influence or at any time directing the actions of her wand vacillating companion. She was indeed by tiful in truth, and tenderness, and purity, and

All with which nature halloweth her daughters;

she should have fallen to the share of one would have guarded her with manly firmness a pearl of great price.

We have said that even when Eustace : knew Chénier he found him an old infirm m the unusual severity of the following winter greatly in him, and it appeared to all that his feebled frame had but little more life in it. often said that he had accomplished the only of for which he had desired a prolongation of life that day which gave Claudine to one who we love and cherish her. He had been unwilling die, he had resisted death, while she was un tected. Having completed his task, he was evidently sinking fast; his decline was cheered the constant society and affectionate care of two children (as he loved to call them); and it attentions of Eustace chiefly sprang from feeling compassion and respect, those of Claudine the spontaneous effusions of love.

One spring day, one of the loveliest that

yet given promise of a returning summer, the old man seemed to rally a little; but he well knew how deceitful were any presages of reviving health. Eustace had gone up into the mountains, and Claudine, alone with her grandfather, listened to the last solemn words of a departing spirit. wept while she listened, yet not altogether sadly; for she knew that time hung heavily on the hands of one who was seeking eternity; but though she mourned not for him, she felt a strange sense of loneliness and of depression, as she contemplated the nearness of his departure. She felt this in spite of her husband's love, and all the blessed hopes of maternity which now she cherished. Intending to banish the melancholy which he had caused, the old man bid her lead him once again to his library table, and place before him the only book he had of late studied, and then to go to meet Eustace, as the hour of his return was nigh. obedience to his wishes she left him, and began to second the mountain path in which she expected to find Eustace. The pure breeze seemed to convey joy on its wing; it dried her tears as it fanned her cheek, and she thanked Heaven with a rejoicing spirit, that even though her grandfather must leave her, still she should not be alone.

Eustace at that moment reached her, and with grateful love she cast herself into his arms, and together they began to retrace their steps to the cottage. As they entered the house, a paleness suddenly overspread Claudine's cheek, banishing

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the glow of health, and a tremor passed over her frame, as she entered the little library of her father, in which an unnatural stillness seemed to reign.

Une tristesse vague, une ombre de malheur, Comme un frisson sur l'eau, courut sur tout son cœur.\*

Clinging to Eustace, she knew not why, she advanced towards the old man; he had bent forward till his head reposed upon the open page, and his arms hung listlessly beside him; his eyes were closed, and on his parted lips was a tranquil smile that seemed to say his dreams were happy; but when they gazed upon the colourless cheek, and marked the total cessation of respiration, and saw that no movement followed though they called him by his name, they knew that he was dead!

Alas! poor Claudine!

\* Lamartine.



## CHAPTER V.

Candida rosa nata fra dure spine.

PETRARCA.

So young! so fair!
But now a bride and mother! and now there.
While thy heart still bled,
The mother of a moment, o'er thy boy,
Death hushed that pang for ever!

BYRON.

EUSTACE was sincerely touched by Claudine's deep affliction, and the sympathy which the sight of grief naturally awakens in the human heart, revived much of his first affection; but this was but a hasty spark, and 'straight was cold again.' His node of existence daily grew more wearisome to him; he often sat in moody silence, turning over n his mind all possible means of emerging from he obscurity into which he had voluntarily plunged himself, and returning to his native country. Time having ripened his abilities, these thoughts daily acquired more weight with him; he began to muse on the possibility of disclosing his real situation to his father, and seeking his forgiveness; but he was still withheld from this attempt by fear, and whenever he turned to Mordaunt's letter, he saw that hat sincere friend spoke in the most undoubting

terms of the opposition his wishes would encounter, and deprived him of the hope that his insignificance would cause his actions to be viewed with indifference.

Claudine long remained wholly unconscious of her husband's increasing dissatisfaction. When she marked his abstracted air, and the listless unconcern with which he regarded all the petty transactions of their daily life, she was grieved to think that she could so ill supply the loss of so intellectual a companion as him who was gone, and by a thousand little efforts would strive to win him to cheerfulness. One evening when he was lost in moody contemplation, his eye vacantly fixed on the fair landscape before him, evidently deriving no pleasure from the view, though he gazed on 'a scene for love and solitude designed,'

All up the craggy cliffs that towered to Heaven, Green waved the murmuring pines on every side, Save where fair opening to the beam of even A dale sloped gradual to the valley wide.

She silently stole behind him, and with the tears in her soft eyes bent over him, and pressing her cheek to his, whispered:

"Dearest Eustace, is it not well for him to be away? Old, sick, and feeble as he was, and often, in spite of his love for us, thinking of those who were gone, will it not be better, far better for us to go to him, than for him to have lingered with us? But you grieve here," she said, "I know that you do, and although I cling to this place still,

saddened as it is, I would fain urge you to go from it, and seek some other in which you may find fresh interests and newer occupations, and above all, companions worthy of you."

"How is this possible!" exclaimed Eustace, with fretful impatience.

"Why not?" replied Claudine, gently. "Surely it were very easy. Let us go into sunny Italy. How often have you talked of your desire to see her matchless works of art, her noble cities, her unrivalled wonders of the past! Let us quit our mountains, our 'palaces of nature,' and seek those others, which are ennobled by all that Nature's most gifted sons could produce."

Eustace listened to her words with an irritated air: he knew that what she suggested was rendered impracticable by his secret tie to her, and that he could not venture to emerge from his retirement unless he was willing to risk discovery, and prepared to make an avowal of his situation. Claudine was unable to read the workings of her husband's mind. She and her grandfather had always perceived that some hidden cause existed, that rendered him entirely indisposed to return to his native country; and so averse was he to speak of it, or in any way to describe his former situation when there, or any particulars of his early life, that by a kind of tacit agreement, these subjects were never entered upon in their conversations. Clauline had been induced to mention Italy, in consequence of the enthusiastic ardour with which Eus-

tace studied the poetry of that country; the reverence with which he and Chénier had always dwelt on its records of old, and every thing connected with its former mighty sovereigns; and the fervent desire Eustace had often expressed to visit its classic remains. And here she was indeed at a loss as to the cause that appeared to render this scheme also impracticable. That Eustace had ceased to be happy she was convinced, and this conviction preved upon her spirits, and robbed her of all her vivacity. Endowed naturally with the most acute sensibility, and never innured to suffering, she felt any disappointment or affliction far more severely than those in the habitual endurance of many evils. She had in this entire seclusion no means of escape, no means of turning her mind away from harassing thoughts; and the result of her painful meditations was a belief that she shackled her husband's movements, and was an obstacle in his path. That such was the feeling of his mind she became daily more assured from the unceasing observance of every look and every word; and the sadness engendered by this idea rendered her daily less able to cheer his Eustace on the other hand, conscious solitude. that he was inflicting on her sufferings the most undeserved, and tormented by an upbraiding spirit, seemed likely to become daily more fretful, and even morose.

Such was the state of things when Eustace received a summons from Lausanne, acquainting him that a person declaring himself dispatched by his

hthe, Lord Llarnarmon, had arrived there, and making earnest inquiries concerning him. he Swiss with whom Eustace had lodged after the outh of De la Broche, was stubborn and faithful his trust, and strictly obeying his master's inactions to give no clue to his present residence thout his command, always forwarded to him v necessary communications. Eustace, ignorant at the message from his father might portend, s full of anxiety to see the bearer of it, and after trief consideration, resolved to depart immediately Lausanne, without communicating either hopes fears to Claudine until he had ascertained which re just. The motive of this determination was and affectionate; he had remarked only the eceding day how greatly Claudine was changed we her grandfather's death; he had observed the leness of her cheek, and the extreme languor of r air, while a feeling of compunction mingled ith his alarm

Change of scene, change of air, any change he ought would be equally advantageous to them th; and he resolved that, as soon as possible ter the birth of their child, which was now daily pected, he would make some efforts to decide ter future destinies. At such a moment it was the without a severe pang, and the revival of all searly fondness, that he could abandon Claune's side; yet such were the awe and terror that e name of his father still retained the power of spiring, that he did not venture to hesitate in

complying with the summons he had received. Accordingly after a brief and agitated leave taking in which he alleged that he was called on by friend to hear important communications from England, he departed. The unhappy Claudine believing in the necessity of her husband's departure, carefully concealed from him the anguish which it caused her; but when he was gone, and could no longer behold her, she sank down in hopeless, helpless agony.

Even to herself, such grief appeared irrational. Eustace could scarcely be absent for many days; and she remembered how often of late she had ardently desired that any diversion might occur that would break in upon, and relieve the monotonous routine of his life. With this idea she strove to master her emotion, and to await his return with calmness. She also strove to arm herself with fortitude to meet the hour of danger, should it arrive during his absence; though the bare suspicion that it might do so caused her heart to sink within her.

"Good Heaven!" said the fair young creature, casting herself on the ground, and raising her eyes and hands in supplication, "if it should terminate fatally—if I should have looked on him for the last time, and die without him! I have so many things to say to him—so much to entreat of him! I would bid him not grieve for me, for in me he did not find his happiness. I would also bid him to cherish our child, and if he go forth into the world

he will,) sometimes, not when he is gay, but when misfortunes come, and my r used to say that they do come to all; hours when it would cheer him to see a ce at his side, to remember his Claudine.

may be near him, and he not know ups, oh! my grandfather, you are near

e poor girl wept at her own fond images. ie was not left long to absolute solitude; poner was it known that Eustace had r, than Marguerite (the mother of Louis) her as if she had been her own child, y indignant and even suspicious at this parture of the stranger at such a time, o their little home and insisted on rerith her till her husband's return. vas indeed very acceptable to Claudine, ill her life been used to the good woman. erite, previously to her arrival, had firmly hat whatever suspicions had arisen in her on Eustace's disappearance, she would onceal them from Claudine; and if any es had occurred to her, she would endeaeem to hold them lightly. But, alas! hours had elapsed before these wise prevere all forgotten, and she had allowed pour forth all her angry doubts, and to y circumstance that tended to strengthen Claudine listened so silently, with almness or rather stillness to her words,

that Marguerite did not see the effect they produced. The iron entered her soul, but her grief was not loud—she only turned her face to the wall and wept, and that so silently, that her loquacious attendant discovered not her emotion. At length she asked Claudine if she would not rise, and she faintly replied, that she thought she was too ill; Marguerite undrew the curtains of the window, and gazed anxiously in her face. She looked so pale, so sad, so very wan, that poor Marguerite, first coming to a sense of the mischief she had been working, seated herself on the bed, and taking her white and trembling hand between her own rough ones, burst into tears:

"Ma mère," for so she almost always called her, "ma pauvre mère, why do you grieve?" said Claudine in a sweet, low voice, "do you not see plainly that I am going to my grandfather? I know that I am, and I know that he will welcome me gladly."

Marguerite only sobbed more violently at these words; and Claudine, raising herself languidly, added with great earnestness:

"Being me some paper and a pen; I must write something, something for you to give Eustace, if I never see him again."

Her lip quivered as she spoke, and a look of inexpressible anguish passed over her face; then she continued:

"I know he will come again, but I shall not see him." She paused awhile; then she exclaimed:

Oh! ma mère, I am young to die! He did not hink I should go so soon. If I had lived another nonth, mother, I should be seventeen."

Poor Marguerite, now in utter despair, sought vith the greatest vehemence to banish this melanholy presentiment; but Claudine only listened in ilence, and then reiterated her request for materials or writing to Eustace. Always accustomed to omply with everything she required, Marguerite ould only obey. After writing for a short time, Claudine sank back on her pillow, faint and expausted: again she made an effort, and after addng a few words, again she desisted, and placing the heet of paper under her pillow, she laid her head ipon it. The setting sun was going down in all ts glory, shedding on the snowy mountain tops hat roseate hue of such wonderful loveliness, pecuiar to her native land. This fair spectacle Claudine urveyed from the window that was opposite to her red.. She gazed forth long and intensely, and then ank back with a profound sigh.

Before morning, the low wailing of a new-born nfant was heard in the home of Eustace, but the air young mother lay there a lifeless corpse.

#### CHAPTER VI.

In the sweetest bud The eating canker dwells.

SHAKSPRARE.

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead, Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb; Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed, Hid from the world in a low, delved tomb.

MILTON.

WHEN Eustace arrived at Lausanne, he found that the messenger dispatched by his father was a confidential servant, living with him at the time when he first quitted the paternal roof. Grierson, bore the tidings which have already been made known to the reader, of his brother Vincent's death. He brought also an arbitrary command to Eustace to return to England without the smallest delay. To comply with this was impossible; to quit Switzerland without returning to Claudine, and without making a provision for her during his absence, was not for a moment dreamt of by Eustace. Grierson, who had more acuteness than was requisite to read the character of the youth he had to deal with, easily perceived his consternation, and guessed that some important cause must exist w render unwelcome a command which augured favourable a change in the circumstances of him 10m it was laid. He immediately resolved to n possession of this secret, as he thought he not fail to turn to account knowledge which Llarnarmon would desire undoubtedly to oband which would probably place the young 1 some degree in his power. His first expewas to avail himself of the dread with which ze so evidently regarded his father, and theree listened with an air of ominous gravity to vnne, who, with some agitation, began to inim of the utter impracticability of departing gland with him, and ventured to add with umption of authority, that he must forthwith to Lord Llarnarmon, and assure him of his on to obey his injunctions, as soon as he terminate the few arrangements necessary to de before quitting a place so long his re-Grierson listened to this speech with rable coolness; he then replied that the sole ons he had received were not to return withr. De Glynne; disobedience to these orders certainly expose him to Lord Llarnarmon's sure; while any sign of manifest reluctance ırn to the paternal roof at such a time would ply exasperate him irremediably with Eustace, he said he supposed to be sufficiently aced with his father's character to judge of th and likelihood of what he averred. De e listened with a kind of frantic despair; to at once for England was impossible; to be ually watched by this man was fatal to all



dispensable to him, and he could afterware by any available means to bind him over to: This line of conduct he therefore pursued; formed Grierson of every circumstance, at him of his immovable resolution to return diately to Claudine.

Grierson listened to this extraordinary diswith astonishment and dismay, not quite we with pity; for he saw plainly that, with replain his father, Eustace's worst apprehensions wo fail to be realised. He himself almost shrat the contemplation of Lord Llarnarmon's when he should find his ambitious scheme thrown by one whom he had sought only as dient tool.

Grierson was a bold, determined man, I always lived in a subjection to his lord like a vassal of old; the one thing he did not a do, was to encounter, still less provoke his He saw too that if he could persuade the

Llarnarmon, merely stating that he had hopes sching Mr. De Glynne very shortly; he then it to allow Eustace time to visit his home, but the counselled him not to think of conveying ung wife to England, but to leave her among in people, until he should have established to consideration with his father, ascertained were his views with regard to him, and discothe most effectual means of conciliating his. In all these suggestions Eustace acquiesced; owing Grierson's long and intimate know-of his father, he felt convinced that to none he more effectually apply for directions in nduct towards him.

nen Eustace proceeded to prepare for his home, he found that Grierson intended to pany him; he was little pleased with this i, but still he ventured on no objection, and departed together. No sooner had they id the well-known mountain path which led is dwelling, than Eustace, springing from rustic conveyance, told Grierson to follow leisurely, and in a moment was out of

He had been absent now for five days, and imediately perceived that some unwonted ence had taken place in his home. The rarden-gate had been lifted from its hinges, ast aside on the ground; the door of his was open, but neither Claudine nor any one as visible; a mournful silence reigned around, aralyzed by an indefinite feeling of fear,



necessaries for the humble funerals of the lit trict. She carried in her hand a kind of white it might be a shroud, and they both appea be approaching his cottage. At the unex sight of him they stopped short in utter con tion, while he, rushing wildly towards them, the weeping Marguerite by the arm, and manded her to give him some tidings of his

"Alas! alas! Monsieur," sobbed she; child, you shall see your son."

"My wife! my Claudine! do not dare me that I shall not see her."

Breaking from Marguerite he rushed diedly into the house. He hastened on reached the pleasant chamber which he and dine had always occupied. The door was far but with a violent effort he forced it ope entered.

On the couch before him lay his fair wife. She was, according to the custom

The poor, terrified women who had followed him were at a loss how to proceed, when the arrival of Grieson reduced their task to obedience. Learning from Marguerite, who was touched with communition when she beheld Eustace's real grief, her milingness to afford him any aid in her power, he were the still lifeless body of his young master to be cottage, and placed him in a bed. He then receeded to inform himself of the state of things.

He found that the burial of Claudine was to the place the following morning, and that Maracrite had taken the unfortunate infant home, and taken it with the greatest care. Nevertheless it teemed but little likely to outlive its mother long, and she therefore had decided that the Curé who has to perform the burial service over Claudine, hould also baptize her child. She had also determined, in the absence of Eustace, to give the labe the name borne by Claude Chénier, so loved and lamented by all his flock, rather than that of the stranger who was regarded with some susticion and dislike.

The violent shock sustained by Eustace had baken his very senses, and he only revived to the the wildest ravings of delirium. All these mangements therefore could only be submitted to hierson, who, leaving the fulfilment of them to farguerite, devoted himself with great assiduity the care of his master; for he felt bound by the total Llarnarmon to exert himself to the most to save the life of his heir and sole remainz child.

Grierson, during the tedious illness which h had to watch, had time to dwell on the fact the by the sudden catastrophe of Claudine's death, the difficulties that had existed between the father and son were in a great measure at an end, and indeed if that of the child followed, would be wholly removed. In that case he would be deprived of the advantage and profit he had hoped to derive from the possession of so important a secret This reflection filled him with a regret which be thought but reasonable, and the lively interest which it led him to manifest in the welfare of the child, made an impression greatly in his favor on Marguerite's tender heart, which was full of penitence for the injustice which she believed she had done to Eustace, and ill-disposed again to form hastily an injurious opinion of any one. Grierson resolved to proceed to England with Eustace as soon as he could remove him with safety; but though very anxious to take him from a scene in which he did not design that he should act, he also desired to allow him a certain time for the recovery of composure before he reached his father. He determined to leave the infinite Claude in the charge of Marguerite, informing that important business exacted the presence d its parent in England, which would greatly affect its future interests; and that she should hear from Mr. Fenton (as he still called him) his further wishes with regard to the child. He also gam her a sum of money of which to make use during their absence. He then wrote to Lord Llarnarmon, informing him of Mr. De Glynne's alarming illness and still precarious state, and alleging as the primary cause of the attack, too great fatigue and cold. All these proceedings were acquiesced in by Eustace, as soon as he was able to listen to their detail; and in a kind of moody, silent despair, he watched without offering any resistance, the preparations made by Grierson for their departure.

His air of helpless melancholy filled Marguerite with compassion, and finding her way to him in private, she gave him the unfinished letter of Claudine which she had found beneath her pillow. With eager desire, yet not without trembling awe, Eustace proceeded to open it. The words were few and simple, but the image they presented of herself pierced him to the heart.

"Dear Eustace," she wrote, "I am dying. I know it well, though Marguerite does not tell me so; and when you return your heart will bleed when you find that you were not with me in my last hour. I used to think sometimes, when I contemplated the possibility of this event, that I would gladly expire on your bosom. But God does not will this!

"I had always an intention to write some few lines to leave behind me, and if I lived, to burn them. I wish to bid you not to grieve, dearest; you are not happy, and if I have been the obstacle to your happiness, the cause of the uneasy repining I have so often read on your countenance, then do I thank God most heartily for vouchsafing to remove me; and may you be happier henceforth! This is a prayer that I have often offered up to Heaven, with supplications also that if it were possible for me to alleviate your sufferings, I might be directed how to do so.

"Our child, Eustace,—if our child live, surely you will cherish it..."

Here she had probably been too much overpowered to continue, for here she had stopped.

Claudine's last letter, a lock of her hair, and a picture of her that had been painted by an itinerant Italian artist, these were the only relics that Eustace bore away from the scene of his greatest bliss and of his deepest woe.

## CHAPTER VII.

Thy neck is bended to the yoke!

What jarres, what cares, what toyle, what discontentsents, and what unexpected distractions shall we light spon!

OWEN FELTHAM.

THE lapse of a few more weeks brought Eustace, in obedience to his father's mandate, back to his mative land and to his paternal home, in some legree restored to health, but sunk into the most repless despondency; and where was he, in a intuation where profound secrecy was all he had to rust to, to seek for consolation?

Though the intercourse between him and his rother had been so small as really to leave them most strangers to each other, yet the tenderness in his heart made Eustace regret that he had been for distant, when an untimely death removed in for ever, and he looked forward to his first beeting with his father with apprehensive dread. He suffered with those he saw suffer.' The sentiveness of his nature rendered the sight of suffring peculiarly painful to him, and his impulse as always to fly from it; for he wanted that manly nsibility that inspires active zeal in the behalf of

misery which we should otherwise deplore in vair He shrank from beholding the turbulence of grin which he thought must prevail in Lord Llarnau mon's bosom for the loss of the child he has loved. Little did he anticipate that the sight of his surviving son would impart any consolation to his troubled spirit, and with unmixed feelings of pair and repugnance at last entered his father's presence.

In both respects was he mistaken; Lord Lienarmon's grief, however deep it might be, did not rob him of composure, and his reception of Eustace was warmly affectionate. In fact, his heart had been filled with alarm and dismay by the tidings Eustace's illness. He then seemed to discern the avenging arm of offended Heaven, outstretched follow him down to his grave, prepared to heat punishment on punishment, about to strip him a every means of pursuing his ambitious ends, and of all the accumulated wordly honours which had as yet obtained. It was under the temporary influence of this sort of superstitious dread that h received Eustace with that rapturous delight will which we snatch at a valued possession which sp pears about to slip from our hold; and Eustace without a key to the complicated movements his father's heart, was greatly touched by this demonstration of love, which filled him equal with surprise and joy.

From the day that Eustace reached his home Lord Llarnarmon never mentioned the name of his first-born, nor alluded to the sorrows that we past. He seemed resolved to stand apart from other men, and not to share the common 'heritage of woe; he would not submit to grief; he expelled it from his heart. Such conduct as this though surprising, is not very uncommon. who are capable of tending, with the most unwearying care and even fond devotion, on the lingerers in life, are seen, when all is finished, to dismiss the past from their minds, as the tale that is told, and unchanged in heart resume the common routine of life with a cheerfulness that is startling to those surrounding friends who awaited the effects of a destructive grief. And this is not the placidity of resignation, but the dissipation of all serious thought that, in a worldly mind, banishes all remembrance of that which is no more seen.

Lord Llarnarmon's treatment of Eustace continued at variance with all his expectations. His former asperity of manner was gone, and was succeeded by conciliatory kindness; the overbearing tone of command, so well remembered, was changed for one of counsel, and even sometimes of appeal. This line of conduct was, beyond all others, the method to enslave Eustace. Its adoption was a signal proof of Lord Llarnarmon's penetration, and was quickly crowned with success. 'He soon became satisfied that

Whate'er he did, was his, e'en while 'twas doing.

This was his desire. Eustace was no longer the impotent victim on whom he might carelessly indulge his tyranny, and vent his spleen. Formerly,

when Eustace had wanted courage to resist, he had not, therefore, been insensible to outrage; he had fled his father's presence. The earliest habits of childhood tell on the future character long, perhaps, everlastingly; and owing to the absence of a spirit of candour, and of a bold adherence to the truth, which deficiencies originated in the timid cowardice of his youth, acted on, as it had been, by a system of terror, Eustace never recovered a high sense of honour and rectitude in his conduct towards others, nor regarded with repugnance concealment or dissimulation.

Lord Llarnarmon now employed himself earnestly in scrutinising his son's character; he wished to make himself well acquainted with the capsbilities of the instrument with which he had to The powers of Eustace's mind, the susceptibilities of his heart, the virtues and failings of his temper, were all reviewed, and judgment was passed on them. Lord Llarnarmon found that the first demanded a far higher place in his estimation than he had hoped or expected. Eustace was, in fact, endowed with a brilliant genius, and singular quickness of apprehension, though wanting in the activity that inclines to exertion, and in that selfconfidence which is necessary to give readiness in applying the skill and knowledge possessed. With regard to his heart, his father saw that it was a stranger to any vindictive feeling, and that the tone of kindness he had adopted had already atoned for past neglect. His penetration enabled him at once to detect the existence of a quality n unsuspected till manifested in action—this inconstancy. The present easily obliterated memory of the past; the influence of those and him was irresistible, and the only difficulty to render him the slave of one, rather than of Lord Llarnarmon saw that it was necessary that e one master spirit should gain an absolute ndancy over him; and he was willing to delegate authority to Lady Theodora Vallenden, believing n the accounts he had received of her remarkwit and beauty, and of her aspiring ambition, : he should find her both capable and desirous participating in, and furthering all his designs. came to the conclusion that this alliance might even more happily effected by Eustace, than it d have been by Vincent, and at once prepared its accomplishment.

all those characteristics in Eustace did Lord narmon discern, which it was for his interest tote; but other facts no less obvious he passed heedlessly, because he saw not how they dever affect himself: he beheld without an tot fathom the cause, the gloom and abction that prevailed in all that Eustace said or

Upon his face there was the tint of grief, The settled shadow of an inward strife. What could his grief be?

was a question Lord Llarnarmon never thought sking.

DL. II.

# CHAPTER VIII.

Ahi! sordo e di pietà nemico
Destino ingiusto!

Perchè più tosto me non hai disciolto
Di questo grave mio tenace incarco,
Più che non lui, e più ch' io non vorrei,
Dando a lui gli anni miei?
Lasso! allor potev'io morir felice!

PIETRO BERESO.

Una donna superba al par di Giuno.

GUIDI.

It was Lord Llarnarmon's desire that the interval between Eustace's return, and a promised visit from Lady Sanvile and her daughter, should be as brief as possible. Grierson was aware of the necessity of giving Eustace a timely wanting of his father's designs, but scarce knew how to convey it. Since their arrival at the Gath he had kept up an appearance of distant respect his manner towards Eustace. He knew that wo other mode of behaviour would excite Lord marmon's jealousy, and that he would immediately suspect him of paying court to the rising rather than to the setting sun, for nothing was so displeasing to him as to see deference should any member of his family, or any inmate of

house, unless accompanied by an evident demonstration that it was paid through them to him. But when informed of the day on which it was expected that Lady Sanvile and her daughter would arrive, Grierson finding it so near at hand, determined to lay aside some of the caution he had hitherto practised, and to ascertain whether Mr. De Glynne was, or was not in ignorance of his ther's views. He well knew that whatever impediment lay in the way, his patron's designs must be carried out; and his own object now was to enact such a part as should, by facilitating the accomplishment of the wishes of the old Lord, and shielding the young heir from impending danger, give him a claim to a reward from both.

There was little time left for action, for Lord larnarmon, scorning the idea of encountering opposition, had deemed no preparation necessary, or perhaps was not blind to the probability that Eustice's affections would more naturally take the desired bent, if no force were put upon them by aggestions or injunctions. The first step that Grierson took was unattended with difficulty. On the morning of the day on which the guests were apected, he sought an occasion to enter Mr. De Gynne's apartment. Pursuing the same part he had hitherto played, of a profession of most unserving fidelity to his Lord, mixed with sincere commiseration for Eustace, Grierson began the superstation by an expression of the joy with

which he perceived that his master (principe through the satisfaction he derived from Eustac presence) was regaining his cheerfulness, and I coming able again to admit of the visits of I friends. He alluded also to the peculiar trial would be to him to welcome Lady Sanvile and I daughter to the Castle. It was, he observed, visit paid under circumstances so sadly unlike the anticipated. Then first appearing to perceive the Eustace was at a loss for the meaning of his discourse, he broke off abruptly, and exclaimed:

"Ah! I see that my Lord has never yet be the heart to enter on this subject with you. I has never yet informed you of the alliance that we agreed upon between poor Mr. Vincent and the young lady?"

"Never," replied Eustace, with astonishment

"Well," so it was," continued Grierson; and had dilated at large on all the manifold reasons the had made it so desirable, and that now only explicted the disappointment. Then having, as had thought, said enough, he quitted Eustace, dispose to go no farther until the lady should arrive, and then to allow his conduct to be directed by the impression which the sight of her should make. Explicate, as soon as Grierson departed, betook himse to his usual resource in hours of more than ord dinary oppression, seeking some 'green retrest where he could remain unmolested, until he followed again equal to encounter the society of those where

had no knowledge of his griefs, and from whom, even if they had been informed of them, he looked for no sympathy.

The ways of Providence seemed dark to him, when he contemplated the lot from which his brother had been snatched away, and that which he was constrained to endure. "If one child was to be torn from my father in his old age," thought he, "why could it not have been he who was so little loved, and so little heeded, as I was then? I am too broken-hearted to prove any solace to his grief, to alleviate his cares, or carry forward his vigorous schemes. How happily might these have been executed by Vincent, and how must his manly spirit and his comprehensive mind flag and repine, when thus despoiled of the instrument necessary for their execution! And Theodora, what have been her feelings? Had she already known and loved him whom she was bid to regard as her destined husband? If so, shall not her sorrow be to me even as the sorrow of a sister? But how will my father support the sight of it?"

Such meditations as these continued to employ Eustace's mind, until the thread of them was broken by the appearance of a travelling carriage entering the park, which he knew must belong to Lady Sanvile. At first he was about to direct his steps homeward; then he thought that Lord Llarnarmon would perhaps prefer meeting them for the first time alone; so he turned again into the avenue in which he had been walking, and entered the

Castle only when the hour of dinner summ bim thither. In the room in which the party assembled, he found only his father and an lady, whose countenance and voice expre peevishness and dissatisfaction, and whose ma was indicative of pride and of folly. To her tace was presented as Lady Sanvile. towards the door frequently in expectation of se Lady Theodora enter, and listened attentive hear if her name were mentioned; but he learned that she did not intend to dine with the Their repast was a very dull one. Eustace fel surprise at Lady Theodora's absence, and hi terest was heightened by what he considered evidence of feeling; but he was astonished disgusted by the trivial conversation addressed Lady Sanvile to her host, without intermissio spite of his abstracted air and serious countens

When alone with his father, Eustace felt desirous to learn from him what degree of intir had existed between his brother and his desibride; but he did not venture to commence subject. He would gladly have retired to his chamber, rather than have again encountered! Sanvile; but feeling that his father must be still equal to doing so, he resolved to abstain from ying to this inclination, and he was rewarded his exertion by finding Lady Theodora in the to which they returned.

Intentionally, perhaps, Lord Llarnarmon left him quite unprepared for the dazzling by

h he was now to behold. The reputation of ad, it is true, reached his ears; but he had ad coldly until Grierson's narrative had ind his mind with a desire to see its possessor. The his imagination had invested her with charms, he found that he had neither truly pated the character of her beauty, nor formed an adequate conception of it.

ecodora's form did not perhaps exceed the le height, but the extreme dignity of her dezent, and the air of command which she could sturally assume, might easily deceive the ber on that point. Her noble brow, and and lustrous eyes bespoke a lofty intelthe fire of her glance would have imparted a cter of sternness to her majestic beauty, had been tempered by an expression of deep and st feeling that gave a cast of melancholy to hole countenance, an effect which was increased he extreme paleness of her skin, the creamy ness of which formed a brilliant contrast to ch braids of her raven hair. The short, curling r lip, and the faultless shape of the head and t, not to be surpassed by any of those reing forms of classic beauty that awaken the tic admiration of the world of taste, added to aughty character that distinguished her.

Armò d'orgoglio il viso, e si compiacque Rigido farlo, e pur rigido piacque.

ne entire contrast which the beauty of this ant woman afforded to the loveliness of Clau-

dine, only enhanced its effect on Eustace. Not Circe's poisoned cup, nor Calypso's charms could have had more power of enchantment on the bewildered brain, than the attractions of Lady Theodora's beauty, refinement and wit, as he beheld them displayed in the first interview, had on the imagination and heart of Eustace.

Lord Llarnarmon, as soon he entered, took a seat beside her which Eustace had not ventured to take, and began an animated conversation which was ably supported by the lady herself. He now displayed a character totally new to his son, who had no idea how brilliant and how delicately playful his wit could be, nor how diversified his knowledge, nor how ready his memory; and Lady Theodora, who at first appeared overpowered with languor and fatigue, became enlivened as she listened to him.

Living, as Eustace had done, completely apart from the world, all the charms of refinement of manner, the polish of fashion and conventional politeness, had been hitherto unfelt and unconceived by him, and he was totally at a loss to account for the indescribable fascination of Lady Theodora's manner and person, even beyond her extraordinary beauty, and apart from it, that appealed with such singular force to his imagination. He listened to her voice with an anxious wish that not even his father might interrupt it, yet he felt unable to address her himself, and while he heard with assenting

dmiration every sentiment she expressed, he was too much embarrassed even to signify how entirely he acquiesced in them. His presence seemed scarcely acknowledged by Lady Theodora, who was engrossed apparently by the conversaion in which she was engaged; but he had no nattention to complain of on the part of Lady Sanvile, who lavished on him every possible mark of politeness of which the time and occasion admitted. To any interruptions that she gave to the discourse, Theodora scarcely vouchsafed to appear Lord Llarnarmon, without violating his sensible. perfect good-breeding, contrived to treat her with entire disregard; and poor Eustace, rather shocked at the conduct of the first, and too inexperienced to imitate that of the second successfully, fell a helpless victim to her Ladyship's wearisomeness.

But while his ears were thus annoyed, his eyes were fixed on Theodora's expressive countenance; and no sooner had he left her presence, than he upbraided himself for a silence that afforded so inadequate an acknowledgment of his lively admiration, and felt that she must tacitly have reproached him with the extreme coldness of his reception of one who had such peculiar claims on his kindness.

Although the Lady Theodora had appeared regardless of every thing excepting the conversation in which she had been engaged with Lord Llarnarmon, nothing had in reality escaped her observation; and when they retired, she followed

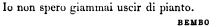
Lady Sanvile into her chamber, cast hereau upon a sofa, and appeared inclined to remain there, though Lady Sanvile looked rather disturbed by this evident determination. At last, finding that however tedious she was in her directions to the attendant maid, and however dilatory in her dismissal of her, her daughter waited with unwearied patience, she unwillingly assumed an air of resignation, and prepared to listen to what she was evidently prepared to say. No sooner had the domestic quitted the room, than Lady Theodora, raising herself with an air that seemed designed to silence reply, addressed her mother, saying:

"You know, mother, that I am as well aware as yourself of the purpose of our coming hither. Let us therefore at once come to an understanding as to what our respective conduct shall be. I now tell you candidly that I will not submit to such degradation in the eyes of Lord Llarnarmon and his son, as must attend the display of your desire to bestow me on the latter. I will not unsought be won. I will not be subjected thus to become an object of contempt to a man who may probably be my husband; and I assure you that every effort on your part shall be counteracted on mine, and that I will defeat every project you may attempt to set on foot. It is enough that you have brought me hither; it is enough that I consent to abide here, and I have now declared the only terms on which I will consent to do so"

## CONTRITION.

Lady Sanvile looked dismayed at the decided tone in which her daughter spoke, but before she could reply, Lady Theodora had quitted the room. Her quick observation had in that one evening enabled her to discover how different was the course her mother was bent on pursuing from that which she had marked out for her, and she determined by this prompt interference at once to cut that her proceedings. Though she knew that her mother would be greatly incensed by this behaviour, she was also tolerably satisfied that she would not venture to act in contradiction to her sijunction.

## CHAPTER IX.



AFTER the arrival of Lady Sanvile an daughter, the time passed swiftly on at Llarn Castle.

Eustace, ever since his return to Englan to his father's home, had regarded hims 'a man crossed with adversity,' and believe he had attained a state of passive indifference, insensibility, to all external objects, however fit nature to touch his heart or kindle his imagis. It has been said that 'l'indifférence fas sages,' and it would have been happy for E could he have remained undisturbedly in this of torpor. It was true that the shock he received had for a time stunned him, and that felt his sensibility to pain or to pleasure dead but with the mere lapse of time, this faculty is ceptibly revived so as to become as much a



Theodora's chacter was invested with peculiar charms for him. It very vehemence, often passing the bounds of minine gentleness, pleased him, as it seemed to and a support to his own vacillating opinions. To ear her speak with the ardour with which she wer supported the sentiments she expressed, insired him with an energy of purpose that waxed tak as soon as her voice ceased to be heard.

Theodora was full of prompt decision, while ustace ever wavered long between two opinions: e saw too much on each side of every question uickly to find 'self-satisfying solution;' and unappily, even where his mental vision distinctly eparated right from wrong, his habits of action rere not so securely founded on the immutable tales of virtue and of truth, as to give this clear exception power to put an end to further doubt with regard to his subsequent conduct. The voice of adination remained to be heard and to be conulted, and her dictates were but too generally beyed. If this same course were frequently purmed by Theodora also, it was by her done more romptly, with less consideration, and therefore with less self-reproach. She did not temporize with conscience, nor attempt to conciliate it; the 1 she did was done boldly. She refused to pause, to deliberate, for she knew herself well enough to feel that so to do would render her incapable of excuting many of the designs she formed. In most things Theodora 'dared no more than might

become a' woman, and a weak man rarely gives his heart to any woman who cannot dazzle his, either by brilliant gifts of nature or of fortune, or by the blandishments of art.

Theodora perceived far more plainly than did Eustace the entire subjection in which his father designed to hold him; and discovering in him gifts of intellect of which a more resolute spirit might have availed itself to shake off the voke of control, really felt an indignant desire to rous him to a consciousness of his own powers, and to support his too pliant nature by her indomitable spirit. Theodora though ambitious had a heart, and prepared as she had been to look forward to an union with Eustace, when she knew him, and found that she could love him, the satisfaction excited by this discovery, imparted to her whole demeanour a softness and tenderness, that added a new and most fascinating charm to those she had already displayed.

A woman like Theodora does not often give her love and her veneration together. It is true that her lofty soul had an innate reverence and admiration for all real superiority; but her haughty spirit could not brook subordination. She could not, like the generous Portia, unreservedly declare herself

Happiest of all, in that her gentle spirit Commits itself to his to be directed.

The ruling passion of her heart was ambition, and her proud temper had hitherto been exasperated by

struggling with fortunes far inadequate to afford it satisfaction. 'The steep when Fame's proud temple shines afar' was the position she coveted; rut she was a woman, and such celebrity could wait her only through her husband. She fully ppreciated the talents with which Eustace was ally endowed. She also saw his deficiencies, ut she felt she could supply them; she thought mt if she could rouse him and direct his exertions. e might become the instrument of all she most ished to attain, and she already loved him sufciently to regard his career with interest, and to esire to see him the object of honour and of res-With this fair prospect opening on her iew, she was happier than she had ever yet been, nd her heart, so often filled with bitterness by be utter want of sympathy and of companionship nith those among whom she lived, melted into enderness. The scenes of contention which had een frequent between her and her mother, though roductive of little real disturbance to Lady Sanvile, and often cost her the deepest shame and regret; such occasions, her pride smarted under her wase of self-degradation, and her better feelings wased her to experience all the anguish of constion. She looked forward to the enjoyment of seace and harmony with a satisfaction only qualified y an incipient dread of Lord Llarnarmon's power wer his son; but she was not slow to resolve hat she would admit no rival near her throne.

Lord Llarnarmon spared no endeavours calculated

to banish from the mind of his guests all thoughts of departure from the Castle. Different modes of occupying the time were proposed by him unceasingly, and in all he arranged that it should ever fall to Eustace to entertain the Lady Theodora; that his services should always be needed by her, and always be at her command. Lord Llarnarmon received rather inopportunely letters of no small inportance from an agent residing in town; but so much was his heart set upon the accomplishment of the scheme he had in hand, that after a brief deliberation, he resolved to entrust business which at any other time, would have exacted his own peculiar and undivided attention, to the execution of Grierson, whom he accordingly dispatched to London without delay.

Sometimes in circumstances that afford little room for rejoicing in the present, or hoping in the future, in spite of reflection producing nothing but depression and apprehension, yet

Such in the midst of all distress Is nature's need of happiness,

that the spirits will mount to a gaiety that mocks at woe, but still it is a most bitter mocking! Such was now the case with Eustace, weak, and miserable as weak. He did not dare to scan the future, nor to pause to look back upon the past, nor to deliberate on the present. He did not dare to listen to the voice of conscience that told him that he was playing false to his father, to Theodora, to Claudine, and to his child. He did not dare to

s true that, on his departure from Switzerland, I not neglected to provide himself with the of receiving intelligence of the fate of the s offspring of Claudine. Such tidings were conveyed to him through the same native usanne, from whom he had received all unications from England, during the time residence with Chénier. A considerable however, had now elapsed without his reany information whatever concerning ild: and he vaguely anticipated with a that sometimes seemed to have in it less r than of hope, (though, it is but just that the moment he became conscious that ter was predominant, he bitterly reproached f) that this ill-fated child of sorrow had s joined its angelic mother in her rest. is he daily grew more sensible of the disof the secrecy he was maintaining, he ted writing a letter of particular inquiry to



"Prepare yourself for the worst," exc Grierson; "you are discovered; both you name and your place of residence are Your child is in England. Louis has broug hither. Surely in your present circumstant will continue concealment at any cost, a services are still at your disposal, only I of course be expected to go unremunerated.

Eustace could not but feel the insult of in these words; but too eager to arrive whole meaning of them to pause to consideresent it, he impatiently desired him to concate whatever fresh information he had a Grierson accordingly proceeded in his tive. He related that, in his visit to I he had one day unexpectedly encountered He had met him in company with a Swiss and he saw that he was immediately recognishin. His suspicions being excited and he had deemed it heat to relate

fact, the courier he had seen with him was his cousin, who had returned to his native place shortly after Eustace's departure; and the curiosity common to that class of men having been awakened by the circumstances of the appearance and disappearance of the mysterious stranger, he fancied that he discerned some promise of a secret worth discovering, and undertook to unravel it, with a cunning superior to that of the honest mountaineer.

Having accordingly by diligence and craft obtained possession of all the knowledge that was to be gleaned on the spot, he persuaded Louis to take the child and to accompany him to London, from whence he was going to recommence his travels. They had not been there many days before the occurrence of the lucky chance of their falling in with Grierson.

Grierson had too much discretion to commence with an attempt to tamper with the fidelity of the honest Louis, but he thought he might venture to sound his more worldly companion; he here found that he had met his match, and that he had no chance of securing him on his side, but by offering him a fair share of the spoil. He discovered that lienri's most sanguine hopes of success were funded on the discoveries which, by dint of unterried perseverance, and the narrowest scrutiny, he had made at Lausanne.

Eustace, in the hurry and agitation of his deparre, had left some trifles behind him; among others, there had been found at Chénier's house a seal that bore the arms of his family, which Eustace had been in the habit of occasionally using and had left in an inkstand that stood in Chénier's library, from whence it had been removed and locked up after the old man's death Eustace had subsequently missed his seal, and ineffectually searched for it, having entirely forgotten where he had placed it. This seal Henri had found in Louis's possession, and eagerly seize it as the most valuable clue to discovery which they had yet fallen on: so much importance di he attach to it, that in his first interview with Grierson, he kept its existence a profound secre and determined to execute without delay hi original design of verifying the arms at the Herald Office. Having done this, he felt that the gam was in his own hands, and assumed a different tone in his intercourse with Grierson. He imme diately declared to him Louis's determination \$ seek out Eustace and his family, and openly t demand the acknowledgment of the young hei The unsuspecting Louis gratefully accepted the offer of his cousin to transact the whole affair for him, under the impression that his experience i a foreign land, and his knowledge of the people among whom they found themselves, could not & to render him far better qualified to conduct it to close than he was himself. Grierson was not slo in demonstrating, nor Henri in comprehending the it would be most to the advantage of the latter to pr

autiously, and by a series of intimidating meato lead Eustace to make advances by which night all in turn profit, and even the child, as on artfully added, might not ineffectually be Accordingly when the time for Grierson's ure arrived, he without difficulty obtained the two Swiss, a promise that they would d no further until he informed them of the produced on Eustace by the knowledge of arrival. Eustace listened earnestly to this ion, and as he listened, he felt his heart yearn He was now so near him that Is his child. ald not but feel an ardent desire to take him bosom, and to clasp him to his heart, as at remained of his lost Claudine. ht even Theodora was for a while forgotten; nen there came a vision sweeter still, floating his eyes enchantingly, like a pleasant , or like a soft melody wafted on a balmy

Joy rose upon him like a summer morn,

thought he beheld Theodora with his child in ms, her dark eyes glistening with tears of pity; brilliancy was dimmed, but that liquid light ir more lovely. The harsh voice of Grierson I on his ear; he started from his reverie, and ig him allow him at least some time for ration, hastily dismissed him.



He never held it worth his pains to hide. The bold all grasping habit of his soul.

COLER

Taunt my faults
With such full license as both truth and malice
Have to utter.

ANTHONY AND CLEOP

When alone, Eustace was much surprifind himself less dismayed by the crisis to his fate was so suddenly brought than he have supposed it possible that he should be relief which he experienced from the prost a speedy termination to all his doubts, his sur and agonies of remorseful struggles, was a delightful. He saw the impossibility of concealment, and he rejoiced in seeing it believing that he was now constrained to d which he wanted courage to do voluntarily. means had he at present in his possession by

him sensible of the whole truth, for he r been acquainted with all the plans conith Lord Llarnarmon's purpose of uniting Lady Theodora Vallenden; and could efore know how vast a fabric he was about lish, how complicated a system he was disarrange. In spite of a lover's doubts s. which had hitherto harassed him. he wed himself to rely on Theodora as on n who loved him. His conceptions of a love had been formed by Claudine, and he contemplated a disclosure to her with not dread, which that to his father, in spite sire to discard his misgivings, caused him. er feelings also,-all of generosity, and of and of tenderness that there was in him,s his desire to escape from suspense, placed im the fulfilment of this sacred duty in so ory a point of view, that he hailed the close day, which was to be the last of concealith a feeling of almost unmixed joy. vhen morning came, and Eustace was again ther's presence, he found all his resolutions d. as the hardness of the ice dissolves bene beams of the sun: and it was with a voice and a failing heart that he ventured it a private audience from him. ance of a certain 'frowning state' been insisted on by Lord Llarnarmon, the bosom of his family, and he never from a dignity of demeanour intended to inspire awe. In the present instance, however, he listened to the timid solicitations of his son with a suavity of manner meant to re-assure and to encourage him; for he did not for a moment doubt but that the subject of their discourse was to be Theodora, and he was beginning to be very impatient to bring this affair to a conclusion.

The hesitation of Eustace's manner and the incoherency of his language, agitated and alarmed as he was, for a time, rendered the facts he wished to convey almost unintelligible to his father, but as the truth began to dawn upon him, the fury with which he received it, surpassed anything that Eustace could have anticipated.

It is true that had he received equal provocation from a stranger, he might have been able to refain from any outward demonstration of wrath, (though probably only with the intent of facilitating revenge, for he never pardoned,) but in the present instance, independent of the rage excited by the destruction and downfal of all his plans, he could not brook that the son whom he had regarded as in reality a slave, though it had been expedient of late to grant him a show of liberty, one whom he never supposed would presume to think, much less to act, in contradiction to his will, had by his under-ground work shaken to the very foundation, his carefully reared fabric. He could have endured it better, had its fall been brought about by any instrument in his eyes less contemptible.

No consideration of prudence restrained the vio-

lence of the rage into which he was surprised by this unexpected communication, nor was any virulence of abuse too coarse to be lavished on his unfortunate son. At length, he said to him:

"And when is this communication to be made to Lady Theodora? In what terms is it to be conveyed that will induce her to hear it patiently? That heart which was yours will be so no more, for she is not a woman to love a man whom she despises! Now go, Sir," he said, "and do no forther in this business until I have considered of it. I would rather call to yonder boy," said he, pointing to a child at play within view of the window, "to give his judgment on matters of import, than appeal to you, who are weaker than infancy."

There are some men too impotent for resistance or for retaliation, who yet can feel a resentment, the force of which would astonish their tyrants; and the of these was Eustace. He left his father without an attempt to answer or to expostulate; but his brow burnt, and his blood boiled with indignation. He wandered forth into the park, undecided to what his next step should be, little inclined to allow his conduct to be ruled by his father's parting injunction, but rather entertaining a vague desire to act in some way contrary to it. At intervals, the weak man, sick of bearing the yoke placed on him by others, sick of being goaded on by the spur of other men's inclinations, when even contrary to his own, sick of his own vacillations,

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makes a desperate resolve to think, decide, and act for himself; he determines that for once 'to purpose and to act' shall be one. Vain and worthy of derision are these impotent resolutions!

'Tis rising from the dead! Alas! it cannot be.

In this mood of mind was De Glynne, when the first person whom he met was Lady Theodors. He stopped, he hesitated, he would rather have avoided her; but she, when she saw him, came forward to join him with a readiness that he could not repulse. They walked onwards in silence, and Lady Theodora as she marked his visible agitation thought to herself, "The time is now come. Now shall I listen to those words I most wish to hear Now will he tell me that he loves me!" and he eyes beamed more brightly with triumph. Still he spoke not, and she looked in earnest scruting on his face. There was even a deeper shade of sadness than was usual on his brow, and a kind of gloomy shame that she had seen there before, only in a less degree. She knew that he had come from his father when she had met him, and she guessed that his stern tyrant had been trampling upon him, and outraging the tender feelings which she believed him to possess. She felt a compassion ate indignation; her pride too was wounded by seeing the man on whom she designed to bestow her hand, thus despised; she wished to rouse and to cheer his spirit.

These thoughts passed quickly through her mind, and she was preparing to act upon them, when on looking up again, she was alarmed to behold the anxiety, the distraction that was painted on his countenance; and with consternation and unfeigned tenderness, she inquired of him what moved him so strangely. He replied:

"Lady Theodora, the time is come, perhaps you will say, is long since past, when I can no longer, consistently with honour, withhold from you a secret of the last importance to myself, momuch as it must materially affect all my future relations with you. From the day I first saw you, you must have seen, you must have known, how pesionately, I have admired, and have loved you! Believing that this could not be, and was not concealed from you, I have dared also to believe that your conduct was not designed to chill my pession. From that moment then ought I to have revealed that, in offering you my hand, I offer the beyond the nominal possession of my title, and of these domains. Before I ever saw you, loved another! that other I made my wife; she bore me an heir; she died in giving him birth, he still lives to inherit his birthright; and I we only this day dared to breathe the secret of is existence to my father."

Theodora gazed wildly on him; she could not speak; she was choked with anger and astonishment; she moved her lips, but no words came om them; her steps faltered, and she was sinking

to the ground. There was an alcove near, and Eustace caught her in his arms and bore her to it; then he brought water from the neighbouring stream, and threw it on her pale forehead. When she reopened her eyes, she cast a glance of inexpressible disdain upon the kneeling suppliant at her feet.

Oh! what a deal of scorn looked beautiful In the contempt and anger of her lip!

"Leave me," she exclaimed, "leave me. I cannot forgive duplicity—treachery."

She rose hastily, but sank down again. He caught her hand, and exclaimed:

"I cannot leave you thus, Theodora. I will not ask you to forgive me, still less to love me. Only hear all that I have to tell. I have no mean apologies to offer, nothing to retract, but much that I could say would extenuate my conduct, at least in the eyes of a merciful judge."

Theodora had permitted him to proceed thus far without interruption, because her trouble of mind had rendered her wholly unconscious of what he was uttering. She was striving to calm the anger that possessed her, and to maintain sufficient self-control to preserve unbroken silence until she had framed some plan for her future conduct; but when the word 'extenuate' caught her ear, she sprang to her feet with fiery indignation, and standing before him with the awe-inspiring mien of a sybil of old denouncing threats of evil, exclaimed:

"Do not stay to insult one you have injured.

## CONTRITION.

word you utter, every moment that you ren my presence is a fresh provocation. Bend ask no pardon for falsehood, from any
se you deem mean enough to practise it."
aying, she darted past him, and was soon
ight, for he did not dare to follow her. His
r her seemed deeper than ever. 'That
which a strong mind has over a weak one,'
r so unbounded, and so surprising in its
as to have been before now ascribed to, and
elieved to be, the results of magic, was in
ds of Theodora, and well she knew how to
it. It was the want of this power that
it poor Claudine the heart of her fickle
i.

## CHAPTER XI.

Yet hear me—not that I endeavour
To lessen or extenuate my offence;
But that on the other side if it be weighed
By itself, with aggravation not surcharged,
Or else with just allowance counterpoised,
I may, if possible, thy pardon find
The easier towards me, or thy hatred less;
First granting, as I do, it was a weakness
In me.

SAMSON AGOMISTEL

SEVERAL hours passed before Eustace ventured to return to the Castle. He retreated hastily to his own chamber, and there remained until the hour of dinner, when he received a summons from his father, which he dared not disobey. He went with a beating heart, not knowing whether he was again to behold the Lady Theodora, or whether he was for ever banished from her presence.

She appeared no more, and he dreaded to meet his father's eye. He expected to find him enraged afresh by the rash contempt with which he had treated his injunctions; but this fear was needless. He could not even discover whether his father was or was not aware of what his subsequent conduct had been. The wily politician in fact, the first

rage past, had recovered his self-command; that too much violence would defeat his; that he had gone too far with his son, if he rendered his yoke too galling, Euslid strive to cast it off. Lord Llarnarmon a man to persist in error: setting aside s past, he began to think how the events ature were to be controlled, and to prepare n.

act, however, of an interview having taken tween Eustace and Theodora, was only disto him by the embarrassment of the former, ; absence of the latter; and angry as he was somewhat pacified by perceiving that neodora had evidently not confided any part on's revelation to her mother; it was still a The unsuspicious dowager alleged no further for her daughter's non-appearance than r indisposition. She had been refused ad-; into her chamber; but this circumstance likely to excite any surprise in Lady Sannd, because it was Theodora's usual mode uct on such occasions; if induced by temndisposition of body or of mind to retire ziety, in neither case did her mother's pread to soothe her. She had no confidence nother's judgment, and scarcely more in tion; and at this time she had deservedly ner indignation, by her extreme anxiety for riage with Mr. De Glynne, which her folly ented her from veiling.

Lord Llarnarmon determined, as soon as he was alone with Eustace, to extract from him a confession of the manner in which his communication had been received by Theodora; accordingly he commenced his interrogations by assuming a knowledge of their meeting.

Eustace, too much exhausted by the miseries of the foregoing day to be alive to his present danger, easily fell into the trap, and quickly be trayed all that his father desired to know. There conversation was, therefore, brief, for Lord Lagranger was throughout stern and authoritative, and without in any way recurring to the events of the morning, except to blame him severely for his disobedience, he left him.

The following day was passed by Eustace in the same state of miserable suspense. Theodora still resolutely refused to re-appear. His father also remained shut up in his library, seeking no communication with him, and keeping him totally in the dark as to what plans he might be forming. This day, however, was far more eventful than Eustace was aware of. Lord Llarnarmon was not inclined to waste an hour uselessly. The space that had intervened between his first interview with his son and his meeting him again at dinner had enabled him to form a plan of action; but by the untimely information given to Lady Theodors the difficulties of its execution were greatly increased and might perhaps be found insuperable.

could not prevent her from being in a measure privy to his actions; she might even be able to control them, for he was totally ignorant how far she would be disposed to lend her power to abet his schemes; how far he might fearlessly confide them to her; in short, how far she would accompany him, and where conscience or cowardice would induce him to stop. That her influence over the timid mind of Eustace would enable her to carry through whatever he could persuade her to undertake, he felt assured; but it was her willingness to act with him, her consent to be subservient to his will, and obedient to his directions, that he had yet to ascertain, and on these points his mind misgave him.

When he found, therefore, that his son had, by this repetition of disobedience, involved him in all these fresh difficulties, his anger and resentment were heightened to the highest degree. Still it was now his policy to refrain from all violent expression of his displeasure.

Another effect of Eustace's confession had been to excite Lord Llarnarmon's indignation towards Grierson, whom he considered to have joined in a conspiracy with his son against him. But though this discovery lost the man entirely and for ever any good will that his Lord might have entertained for him, it did not render the calculating politician averse to the employment of his services, which at this moment he needed, and accordingly he summoned him to his presence.

The haughty grandeur that was characteristic of Lord Llarnarmon, rendered any altercation with a menial impossible. He treated him with stemness and disdain, and in a few words made him sensible that all the transactions of the past were now laid bare to him. He did not permit him to occupy his attention or his time by offering a single word of justification or apology; what he demanded was implicit obedience for the future. "You imagined foolishly," he said, calmly and coldly, "that you could turn to account the secrets of my son; but you must have known perfectly that, in return for the trust reposed in you by me, your first duty was to communicate without reservation to me, everything that took place between you and him, and everything that you learnt or remarked respecting him in Switzerland. You have abused my confidence; let that pass. See only that you do not so again. I shall not repeat this caution a second time. I shall now inform you of what I require at your hands, and I look to you for the exact performance of my injunctions. Find some person whom you can trust, or rather, if possible, over whom you have authority; with such a person I would place the wretched child whom these Swiss have in their possession. His future place of residence must be remote from hence; he shall receive a fitting remuneration for this charge at my hands. The courier too must be satisfied. If the other fellow be too obstinately attached to the execution of his

and and

first design to be moved from it, why you or his cousin must silence or blind him in some manner, and let him be sent back home at my expence, if he will. Such an act of kindness will dispose him to place trust in us. The history of this infant's birth shall from this moment die, and every precusion necessary to secure this secrecy shall be taken. Begone, and dispute not my words, nor presume to deviate in any measure from the line of conduct which I direct you to pursue."

Grierson left Lord Llarnarmon, crestfallen but yet believing that he saw the means of retrieving the error into which he had fallen, by the punctual execution of his patron's present demands.

Lord Llarnarmon had still a wish unaccomplaned; this was to see Lady Theodora, and that without his son's knowledge. He infinitely preferred the idea of addressing her by word of mouth to that of making any written communication to her; for he was satisfied that the superior experence of years would enable him, if confronted with her, at once to fathom her designs and read her sentiments, and would lay bare to his view all the most secret emotions of her heart, however great might be her desire to veil from him the depth or nature of her feelings. He walked to and fro, impatiently considering how his wish was to be obtained. After a few minutes he approached his writing-table, and addressed to her a brief and ernest entreaty (which he commissioned Grierson to convey safely and secretly) that she would grant

him an immediate interview, and he suggested to her the means of making it so private that it should be known to no other inmate of the castle but themselves, in these words:

"You can, if you please, leave your chamber by a door which hitherto perhaps you have never opened. The passage into which it enters will lead you at once to a private entrance to my library. There I will await you, if you will accede to my request. The secrecy which I advise will be calculated to place your future movements solely at your own control, unrestricted by any other dictates than those of your own judgment and feeling."

His request was granted; and after a short conversation the Lady Theodora quitted his apartment, paler than when she had entered it, and her brow was contracted, and her lip compressed as if in pain.

Evening came, and found the unhappy Eustace still distracted with suspense. He at length obtained some relief by finding some occupation. He determined that he would write to Theodora, as she still refused to meet him; and by detailing to her all the circumstances of his mournful history, he hoped to soften her feelings towards him, perhaps even more than if her indignation were aroused afresh by his presence.

After much irresolution, and a thousand comments, he began his letter; the mere occupation soothed him, and even were he never to have transmitted the paper to Theodora it would have served him well; solacing his spirit nearly as much as

communing with a friend, by the power it afforded him of pouring forth all the stifled feelings of his heart, and of giving vent to long suppressed emotions and sentiments. And how much, now that his long silence was once broken, did it seem to him that he had to tell! How his narrative flowed on! Surely the eloquence of truth and passion must prevail. Surely she cannot read such words tempoved!

It was long past midnight before he was willing to come to any conclusion, and complete exhaustion procured him the blessing of a long and heavy lumber.

Miserable as he was, when he re-opened his eyes, yet at least he was sensible that a heavy burden was removed. There was no longer in existence that fatal secret which would interfere and interrupt all his meditations, and constantly oppose a bar to every hope and every design. He need no more lie down at night full of care how he should reveal the truth in the morning, full of remorse that another day of concealment had been allowed to pass, more awake to contemplate with dismay the task which conscience urged him to complete; to ponder and to weigh the difficulties of its execution, and fruitlessly to plan and to reject a thousand modes of doing so.

The first thing to which he turned his thoughts the means of rendering his last night's labours twailing; and he, not without misgiving and dread, t last summoned up courage to send to Lady heodora the written history of his past life. He

waited to learn whether it would be a received with the utmost anxiety. It brought back to him, and the day see to pass on as the preceding ones, until entering his apartment on the near at the dinner hour (not venturing to absorber from that meal, from a dread of inf father's anger, and exciting Lady Sanveions), found a sealed paper on his table eagerly tore open.

The words were few, written in penc thus: "I will see you once more if yo this evening in the library. I have letter." It was not signed, but he de from whence it came, and it filled his sudden hope and joy. She had read it had softened her towards him; he sher alive to pity at least. But what ominous word "once" mean? It was us dora to indulge in unmeaning threats. interview to be a parting?

### CHAPTER XII.

De pensées sur pensées mon âme est agitée
De soucis sur soucis elle est inquiétée;
Je sens l'amour, la haine, et la crainte et l'espoir,
La joie, la douleur, tour à tour l'émouvoir:
J'entre en des sentimens qui ne sont pas croyables;
J'en ai de violens; j'en ai de pitoyables;
J'en ai de généreux qui n'oseraient agir;
J'en ai même de bas, et qui me font rougir.

CORNEILLE.

WE have said that the letter Eustace had written was not returned, but though Theodora received it, she let it lie for a while before her unopened. An eager desire to know its contents at length overcame the angry pride that made her look on it with scorn, and she had not proceeded far in the perusal of it, before she became wholly absorbed, and even forgetful of self, in the interest which it inspired. When she arrived at the end, she let it fall, and buried her face in her hands. alone, she struggled with her emotions, but in a few minutes she burst into a flood of tears, and wept unrestrainedly. Still if tender compassion were the first cause of her agitation, some more painful feeling seemed quickly to mingle with it. She wrung her hands; her lips quivered with anguish; she started up and paced to and fro impatiently. Stopping suddenly she exclaimed: "Hitherto, if unhappy, I could pray!" Having uttered these words with a countenance of unspeakable grief, she flew to a couch, threw herself upon it, and sobbed and wept violently. Her sobs gradually became less audible, and were succeeded by long deep-drawn sighs. After the lapse of about an hour she rose, and with recovered calmness, approached a large mirror, and surveyed herself with stern scrutiny.

"I will not," she said in a low voice, "appear before that ruthless man whom I must now seek, with one trace of anguish or of regret on my countenance. He shall not exult in my misery."

She unbound her long hair, and smoothed and replaced its raven braids; she wiped away the undried tears on her cheek, but this seemed in vain, for others quickly followed in their course. She still paused and mused for a few moments:

"No," she then said, "he will be overcome, and I shall serve rather than injure him by taking a part in it. His father is remorseless; 'the oak, not to be windshaken.' If I fail him he will find another to be his instrument; better for Eustace that it should be me than another."

Again she wept bitterly, but she hastily brushed away her tears with looks of impatient score, swallowed a glass of cold water, and passing her hand over her brow as if to clear away every cloud from it, quitted the chamber by the door Lord Llarnarmon had indicated.

Who that had followed her, and seen her a few moments after, standing with haughty composure in Lord Llarnarmon's presence, could have divined the scene that we have just described? not a trace of suffering on her countenance, except that she was very pale; she wore an air of unruffled dignity and proud command; none would have guessed that she was a creature 'full of smiles, and full of tears.' The strength of her feelings no one had ever doubted, but the tender expression of them would have astonished even those who knew her best; and though in her own chamber she wept often and long, and even small things would touch her to the quick, yet when the tears were wiped away, no traces of them were to be observed. This power of concealment was a source of bitter pleasure to her. To weep alone afforded her all the relief she wanted; to weep alone was to her far more soothing than to weep on the bosom of any fellow creature.

But the time was coming when the fresh spring of smiles and tears should alike run dry, when she should but seldom smile, and when her grief should be such 'as passeth show.'

Beneath the studied calmness which Lady Theodora maintained, Lord Llarnarmon's penetrating eye detected plainly the violent turmoil within, and he almost felt compassion for her. Her proud self-command excited his admiration, and touched him far more than the most pathetic show of grief would have done; but the first words she spoke



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deemed your dominion over your son absolute up to this time, and yet you have found yourself deceived; you may be deceived here again. Your efusal to acknowledge your grandchild cannot affect his inheritance of his father's birthright. Eustace nust consent to disown him as well as you. In his transaction do not expect me to mingle my counsels with yours, because I consent to see your con. I mean but to take leave of him, and to tell him my unalterable determination never to see him again as long as his situation remains what t is."

"Your conduct and your language yesterday, Lady Theodora," replied Lord Llarnarmon, with lifficulty restraining his rage, "give me a right to equire more than this at your hands."

"I think not," answered Theodora with the reatest haughtiness. "I know not what the esult of this projected interview may be; but I never bound myself to aught, nor will I."

Lord Llarnarmon waived the discussion for the ime, and said:

"Does Eustace speak of a necessity for acknowedging this child openly in his letter?"

"He does not appear to meditate any further luplicity," returned Lady Theodora, with bitter arcasm; and she walked up and down the room n great agitation. Then approaching Lord Llararmon, she stopped before him, her eye flashing, and the crimson blood mounting upon her hitherto plourless cheek.

"It is in vain," she said, "for us to try to ple the part of dissemblers to each other. You surmoned me hither yesterday, that you might obta a promise of my services; and you hate me to-de because you see that I am not your slave. The I will neither be your slave, nor your accomplice yet my conduct shall greatly assist your design. Hope every thing from my interview with your so the shall come to you when it is over, eager hear anything that you can suggest that she appear likely to conciliate Theodora's favour."

Lord Llarnarmon, at this sudden and unlook for change in her language, would have ove powered her with thanks for her proffered aid; be she turned abruptly from him, and instantly be him.

## CHAPTER XIII.

rillante fortune ne mérite point, ni le tourment lonne; ni les petitesses où je me surprends; ni ions, ni les hontes que j'essuie.

LA BRUYÈRE.

1.

Id be difficult to say whether Eustace or felt most agitated in preparing for this nterview; but Theodora experienced a exceeding any that Eustace was capable. The agitation of a weak mind may eed that of a strong mind; but the of anguish that the latter can endure, n to be conceived by the former. Theotroubled by the bitter truth to which she shut her eyes: that as soon as she gin to 'act this scene of excellent diswhich was 'to look like perfect honour,' descend from that high pedestal on which therto placed herself, and for ever sink in esteem, and in that of him who loved



the dazzing effects of her beauty to her passionate eloquence to persuad promptitude of action and energy of divehemence of purpose to sway; and sithese would be the means of establish future a despotic empire over his mind, the means of separating them for every the bottom of all these considerations loss of her own self-esteem that touch deeply.

To have purchased the prize by penalty, she would have borne with joy of suffering, bodily or mental. But we had hitherto so proudly despised othe learn to despise herself? This was too felt that if she desired to persist in the which she was entering, she must not ag it in that light. And her pleasant dra and happiness, one of the few concer she had permitted her heart to 'dally

t now about to become 'a cleaving mischief way to virtue?'

arrival of the appointed hour cut short distracting thoughts; and she prepared to which her task. She did not, in order to Eustace, assume that forced composure with the met his father. She had undertaken to urt. and she determined not to do so unavail-Every means of persuasion, every species ence, she intended to employ. Her dress rposely negligent; her long shining black ing in heavy braids on her snowy throat; ek burnt with a brilliant glow, proceeding verish excitement, and occasionally heightconscious shame; her eyelids were heavy eeping, and a gentle langour pervaded her frame that invested her with an interest to herself.

m Eustace entered, he found her seated in a ul attitude; her face was turned from him, rtly concealed by the hand on which she was; the other fell listlessly by her side. He ched her timidly; still she moved not. He n his knee beside her, and ventured to raise ad in his; as he did so, he heard her tears by one upon the marble-table on which she he could not restrain his own, which gushed and bathed the hand which lay so passively

At length, she turned her face towards ad it was with such a touching expression of th, that it smote him to the heart.

- "Oh, Theodora," he said, "I did not expect to find you thus! Upbraid me, reproach me, say that you hate me!"
- "No, Eustace," she replied, "I love you! But," she added in a sad voice, as if to check the joy that bearned on his countenance, "I sent for you to bid you farewell, and would fain avoid any thing that may weaken my resolution, or increase your regret."
- "Good God!" interrupted Eustace passionately, "does such a confession avail me nothing? If you love me, cannot you forgive me?"
- "I do forgive you: from the bottom of my heart, do I entirely forgive you!"
- "Nay, Theodora," said Eustace bitterly, "this is a cruel mockery."
- "Use not such words to me!" exclaimed she. "Forget not who is the injurer and who the injured. I will not reproach you, and you surely dare not reproach me."

So saying, she hastily snatched her hand from his hold, and burying her face, burst afresh into tears.

"Pardon these last words of despair; weep not, my beloved! reproach me rather: and before you banish me for ever from your sight, heap on me all the scorn I deserve. Spurn from your feet the mean, weak, faltering idiot, whose love never fell on aught save to work its misery. In your own strength, despise my weakness, or even learn to hate me;—learn to love another;—do any thing

rather than suffer for my sake! I will leave my native country again and for ever. My child shall return to it when of an age to claim his rights. I will do a tardy justice to my poor Claudine, and resign every hope of happiness for myself."

As Eustace spoke thus, Theodora raised her head and fixed her eyes upon him. When he ceased, she slowly and thoughtfully replied after some minutes' silence:

"If it be Claudine who possesses all your affection,—if your heart be buried in her grave,—then do thus. But if not, then hear me. Yes," she continued, "there is still one resource remaining. Reflect. Which have you most injured? Claudine or Theodora? To which in justice do you most owe reparation? You remember the injuries of the one; but do you not forget those of the other? Ah, Eustace, you deceive yourself; this shows with whom your heart is."

Eustace was wounded and amazed by this language. He knew indeed that in his conduct towards Theodora he had dishonoured himself by concealment; but the remorse which he could not silence for the far greater wrongs inflicted on Claudine, on her fame, on the fortunes of her child, by the falseness of the heart that had ceased to love her, all these things were pressing upon his conscience when he entered Theodora's presence; and not until he had in some measure repaired these prior and heavier wrongs, would he have been free to meditate on those which Theodora

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She glanced at Eustace to mark the wrought; she saw that he listened not the 'tongue of hollow counsel,' and sh by a sudden change from her skilful soppassionate appeal to every feeling of low derness in his nature, to overcome the ling virtue that remained.

"But why rests it with me," she sa you truths which should never have b from your mind? You returned hither—me, or at least allowed your father to you knew all that had preceded your a knew that I had been taught to conside to become the bride of Lord Llarnarr and you succeeded your brother without ing the fatal obstacle known only t You told me, Eustace, but a few days from our earliest acquaintance your passi Oh! Heavens! does it deserve the nar

You no pity? No feeling save what was selfish? Even if the pangs of loving in vain were unknown to you, could not your heart imagine their bitterness? You thought not of me. No! you have never yet loved truly; love is forgetful of self, and you have loved selfishly. Oh! how selfishly! Eustace! Claudine and Theodora are your victims."

Here she paused again, and wept anew.

Eustace, pierced to the heart at the sight, started up, and paced to and fro, wringing his hands in impotent grief. He vehemently called on Heaven to witness how sincerely he deplored all the sufferings of which he now saw himself to have been the cause; at length approaching her again, he thus addressed her:

"The past admits of no reparation; who can recal it? It is too late to attempt to retrace my steps; but, oh Theodora! do not pierce my heart by implying that I am forgetful of your wrongs. I confess I never yet viewed my situation with regard to my hapless Claudine in the light in which you have placed it now. Heaven knows that were she still alive, I would brave my father's anger and the world's contempt, and hold no rank in it which she should not share. But Heaven's superior wisdom has removed her to a sphere far better fitted to her saintly spirit!" He stopped, overcome by emotion; then he continued: "All that I have now to do is, in sincere contrition for the duplicity exercised towards yourself, to



"No," replied Theodora, coldly. "I dictate nothing. You know best your o you know what it bids you do with regapast and to the future. You can best j far your happiness depends on my bein being your wife. I have told you, tha present situation that is impossible; i stances alter, you can, if you will, seek m part now with these words on my lips, where will change till all else change beside; E Glynne, I never will be your wife as lochild of Claudine Chénier is your heir."

Thus she closed their interview; proudly determined that the action to incited him, should be accomplished by I by his father; she would know nothing, authorize nothing; she was resolved to further counsel nor suggestion; and if a tenderness or present remorse withheld the execution of the act she desired.

# CHAPTER XIV.

Le dessein en est pris. Je le veux achever. Oui. Je le veux.

RACINE.

Di transitorio onor rispetti vani, Che qual onda di mar sen viene e parte, Potranno in te più che la fede e 'l zelo Di quella gloria che n'eterna in cielo.

TA880.

LADY THEODORA'S self-imposed task was as yet only partially executed; she was resolved to quit Llarnarmon Castle at the dawn of the following day, and she desired previously to have a clear and final understanding with Lord Llarnarmon, and to communicate to her mother her immovable determination. Irksome indeed was the necessity for these two interviews, but she resolved to complete all before she gave herself a moment for rest or retrospection; her nerves were strung, and she knew that if she paused to relax, she should be unable again to restore them to their unnatural tension. "This day and this night for action," she said to herself; "and then all will be over."

Accordingly she sent immediately to Lord Llarmon, to request to see him. He, anxious to knew the result of her communication with Eustace, returned a ready acquiescence. She entered his presence, with the haughty demeanour of a queen about to lay her commands upon a subject in whose loyalty she has but an uncertain confidence. He welcomed her in a manner even obsequiously affectionate. Chafed as her proud spirit already was by the necessity she had imposed on it of practising deception, she was not in a mood to brook patiently an attempt to deceive her. She hardly deigned to accept the proffered seat, and when Lord Llarnarmon tenderly grasped her hand, as he exclaimed: "Dearest Lady Theodora, am I to welcome you as a daughter?" she angrily withdrew it, and without condescending to make a direct reply, began to speak as she had already meditated:

"Lord Llarnarmon, I requested this interview in order to make known to you my intention of quitting the Castle to-morrow at break of day. I have not yet intimated this design to my mother, but I doubt not she will comply with it. Do not start in alarm; I neither have nor shall confide to her the real cause of this proceeding. As to my conversation with your son, I am perfectly willing that you should be made acquainted with every thing that passed; but it must be from his lips, not from mine. You are, from the position you hold, far more qualified to be his counsellor than I am. I have placed him in possession of my unalterable determination. My last words to him were these, by which I will ever abide: 'While the

Claudine Chénier is your heir, I never your wife.' If any change take place in circumstances, I have authorized him to known to me. And now I demand that gain may this subject be recurred to at any seriod. I will join in no further discus-Whatever you decide, I will be ignorant of cision, and of your actions. This is my I unalterable resolution, and on no other ill I ever resume my intercourse with him you."

The angry spot did glow on Cæsar's brow, ugh he did not venture to manifest his ord Llarnarmon replied, with a supercilious

', Lady Theodora, if the exertion of your has been vain, what inducement can I reiterate so hopeless an attempt?"

m not aware that any thing I said declared, inferred, that any attempt on my part had strated. I bid you learn the result of our tion from your son rather than from myd that silence, on which previous considerated me to resolve, neither taunt nor rehall pique me into breaking."

these words she rose, and in vain did Lord non, seeing that it was fruitless to seek for her confidence from her, then direct all his obtain a promise that she would defer her e until he had heard from his son what she to communicate, in order at least to consult further with him after his interview with Eustace. Her confidence that she had effected all that she desired, made her firm in her desire to depart before her suggestions could be put into practice, in order that she might entirely avoid implication in any following transaction, and be able hereafter to plead ignorance and innocence. She could not bear, with the hope of eventually becoming the wife of Eustace, to hold a place in his memory as the partner of actions he could never recal without remorse and shame. Firmly refusing, therefore, acquiescence with any of his wishes, she concluded their interview by bidding him farewell.

"Adieu!" she said; "Lord Llarnarmon, we part now, perhaps for ever. Let us not waste time in unmeaning and unprized expressions of esteem or regard. Adieu! May our plans prosper."

With a scornful smile she turned away, but she stopped suddenly as she reached the door, and turning back again, and coming close up to him, she said in a low tender voice, and with a solemnity of manner:

"Do not be too cruel to him. Believe me, I know him well now: too much violence would defeat your purpose."

She paused, as if for an answer; but he whom she addressed was in too angry a mood to vouchsafe any; and with a tear dimming the fire of her dark eye, she left the room.

### CHAPTER XV.

In all the omnipotence of rule and power.

ADY THEODORA had still another conflict. had still to meet her mother, and could not do rithout dread. Her anger, her mortification, arriosity unrestrained by any delicacy of feeling, absence of affectionate sympathy, all these rose efore her sickening vision; she paused, and y times retraced her steps before she finally ked at the door of her chamber and sought ttance.

ld Lady Sanvile was seated on her sofa, peg diligently a novel, in which she appeared eeply interested, that not without reiterated lications from her daughter, would she lay it

- . She listened to her with incredulity, then indignation; and her first intelligible reply a decided refusal to comply with a request so asonable and so ill-timed.
- s to spending the night in preparations for thus otly quitting a house, the possessor of which her most valued friend, no freak of temper id induce her so to act. Theodora might, if pleased, discard Mr. De Glynne, as she had

other eligible suitors before him; but she had indulged her caprices too long, and if now her favourite scheme was to be thwarted thus suddenly she would for the future leave her conduct to her own guidance, but should no more allow her humour to disarrange all her plans, and disturb her comfort.

Lady Sanvile spoke thus with the hope of foring Theodora to unveil her mysterious conduct. She was very angry at the concealment of her motives; not that she was hurt by this want of confidence in her child, but she was exceedingly displeased to see the whole of her scheme for her daughter's marriage completely overthrown; and she was also a victim to the most eager curiosity to know the clue to this extraordinary behaviour. With a bursting heart, Theodora restrained her impatience, and attempted by reasoning with her mother, to obtain compliance.

"Hear me, mother," she said earnestly, "and then tell me whether you will or will not allow me to act as I see fitting. If I stay here another day, I most solemnly aver I never will be Mr. De Glynne's wife. The only circumstances under which this can ever be possible, must be brought about by our absence. If, therefore, you are still interested in the completion of this project, believe me, your only means of furthering it, is to follow my suggestions. Let us depart to-morrow; Mr. De Glynne will then see how much I am in earnest; and if he love me, he has yet the means of making me his wife."

#### CONTRITION.

"I will not enter into any such rash and silly schemes. I see now plainly what all this is. That unconquerable haughtiness, to correct which all my efforts have so long and so vainly been em-Ployed, is again at work. But if your wish is to make your lover your slave, believe me, that will be better effected by your remaining near him, where he cannot escape the power of your beauty. That out of sight, depend upon it, he will be suffitently free to remember and reflect on your faults, bove all, on your temper; and he will not leliberately and calmly seek you again. I know hat you think Mr. De Glynne a fool, but I relieve him to be too wise to act as you would vish. At any rate, it is by his folly that you nust profit, and my advice to you is to remain lear him."

The utter inapplicableness of this speech, and he petty strokes of malice with which it was replete, filled Theodora with impatient indignation; the hardly knew what mode of persuasion now to attempt; and yet she could not believe that her mother would seriously persist in acting in a way contrary to the wishes she expressed.

"For heaven's sake, mother," she said, with as much calmness as she could command, "do not detain me by this querulous childishness. If you ever wish to see me under this roof as the mistress of it, we must depart from it now. If you are willing to resign that hope, why then I confess he measure I recommend ceases to be important."



sition to her dictates, but she had felt u suffer this opportunity of irritating an her to pass unenjoyed: for with all the a weak and vulgar mind, she triumpl infirmities of those before whom she fel quail; and while her blind admiratior of her daughter's mental qualities pre from running counter to her opinions cowardice rendered her unequal to wher violence, yet as far as she venture lighted in irritating her temper, and i herself for the constant subjection in lived, by provoking her into the comfaults, which her cunning had discove peculiarly galling to Theodora's lofty spi

"Well, child," she replied, "leave night, and to-morrow I will think about

"No, Madam, to-night, if you ple Theodora sternly. ray how are we to have horses here at a the morning?"

already dispatched a man on horseback

!! Lord Llarnarmon is retired now to ent; how shall I bid him farewell and for all his kindness and attention?"

seen him, and said to him everything my way called for; and as to his kindttentions, believe me, mother, they were or our thanks."

child, you have taken everything out of I see, as you always do. You will doing this, I really believe; but I have "."

heodora walked out of the room withto hear her final words, and no sooner
e privacy of her own chamber than she
to a paroxysm of anguish beyond
On the verge of taking this last
was to rob her of all self-esteem,
nd of desperate terror she paused a
o look around to see if there were
outstretched to save her, no friend
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of her mind, and under the semblance
udd strength to her resolution.

she exclaimed bitterly, "that I had a o could befriend me, one whom I could h perfect confidence—one whom I could reverence! And what would such a one me at this moment? How would such regard my conduct? If I could but love n ther, even though unable to respect her—b love one so insensible! She asks for what rest—while her child is in agony! Of treatment turns my heart to stone! I resign Eustace. If I lose him I shall be w one in the world to love me—without one t He and Theodora are alone; we must sustai other. Let us cast all the past behind u freed from the baleful powers that have inflour lives hitherto, make our future more wo ourselves."

Resolutely tranquillizing her spirit with th cious reasoning, and crying 'peace, peace, there was no peace,' she proceeded to preparent departure without further delay; and the had scarcely dawned on the following mobefore she was many miles distant from Llarn Castle.

### CHAPTER XVI.

I see below some mighty one
Arises, mantling o'er
With proud defiance, and anon
Is past, and heard no more.
THOUGHTS IN PAST YEARS.

WILL any of my readers experience surprise when they hear that only a few months elapsed between the hasty departure of the Lady Theodora, and her return to Llarnarmon Castle, as the affianced bride of the heir of the ancient Barony?

Lord Llarnarmon had expressed a particular desire that the approaching marriage should take place at Llarnarmon; for within the Castle was a chapel, more ancient than any other part of it, in which from the time that possession had become the inheritance of the De Glynnes, all such ceremonies as related to the marriages or deaths of the sons and daughters of that house, had been celebrated. The present Lord had too much pride to waive this custom; and Theodora, who felt that from the day on which she should assume his mame, her ambition must be grafted on the same stock, and must not look to bear any blossoms or fruits, but as a branch of the same ancient tree,

assented to his request without reluctance. In her former home too, her sudden movements had not passed without conjecture and comment; and she was not unwilling to escape from a place where she knew that malevolence was exulting over her apparent defeat. With contempt and anger, despising the malice of the vulgar, and yet resenting it, she urged her mother to return with her to Llarnarmon. Lady Sanvile, after a temporary, or rather feigned opposition of her wishes, complied with them, and they commenced their journey.

When they came within sight of the Castle, Lady Theodora's countenance was overshadowed by a cloud; but that she might not betray her dejection to her mother, she exerted herself to support a conversation with a spirit and a patience seldom called into play when she addressed her. Still as they drew nearer, she became more oppressed with gloom, and at length sinking back in the carriage, maintained an unbroken silence, from which Lady Sanvile did not venture to arouse her.

Eustace was awaiting their arrival in nervous trepidation, and when Theodora entered the Castle, she was very pale, and seemed scarcely able to support herself. They were received and welcomed by the old Lord, and as his eye fell upon her, and read on her expressive countenance the signs of inward suffering, his lip curled in scorn, and his eye brightened with malignant satisfaction. This exultation was not

hidden from Theodora. The sight of it was sufficient to restore her to self-command, and she went forward to meet him with cheerful alacrity and graceful deference. Such were her ready courtesy and apparent ease in the acceptance of all the tokens of love and respect that were lavished on her, that Lord Llarnarmon was reduced to sustain the mortification of believing, in spite of his wishes, that he had been mistaken in his first reading of her countenance, and forced to think that no emotions, but those of a pleasurable nature, could have appeared on it.

Apparently, festivity and joy reigned triumphantly throughout the Castle; the guests were numerous, and of the noblest of the land; the entertainments brilliant and varied.

Nothing was wanting, except reality where there was only appearance, and happiness where there was only revelling.

Very different were the preparations made in honour of Eustace's second nuptials from those humble and modest ones that had graced his first! And very different was the bride, who decked herself in all jewelled splendour, from the fair and gentle creature whose loveliness making her 'simplicity a grace,' had then stood beside him! Noteven Eustace, blinded by passion, could wholly shut his eyes to the force of this contrast; he felt for a moment as though a veil were removed from before them, and he perceived that the heavenly Una was gone and the false Duessa, in borrowed charms, had

filled her place; but it was only for a momer he saw thus clearly.

The marriage was consummated, and fron day all things seemed to prosper with them. Theodora's brother had now arrived at the of his power, and all Lord Llarnarmon's ambitious views appeared to be on the ve accomplishment. Nor was Eustace incapal entering into them; both Theodora and his: found that they had made no false estima the intellectual powers which they had believe to possess. He exerted them in the direction pointed out; he adopted their views with enthus and carried them forward with a vigour never displayed by him. Ambition seemed by consent to become the ruling passion of three minds; and Eustace and Theodora so by blindly yielding themselves up to the falls promises of its 'brilliant follies and its splendic to forget that peace of mind and purity of science had been sacrificed for their attain With Eustace, the visitings of compunctions brief and unfrequent; but Lady Theodora, the she had remained, as she had asserted the would do, in total ignorance of the mann which Eustace and his father had complied her demand, nevertheless struggled with more remorseful recollections than those molested their peace. Eustace, as has a been plainly demonstrated, was incapable of continued suffering; it was not possible to

a lasting impression upon him; he was by nature fickle; he possessed little fortitude; had his bosom been racked by half the anguish that Theodora experienced, he would have retraced his steps, undone the work of his own hands, and relinquished any design however resolutely formed. He was not, however, tempted to these desperate measures, for he found it possible to banish the past from his memory, and to live with tolerable ease in the present. That which chiefly disturbed his happiness was, the stern and continued conflict carried on between his father and his wife for supremacy. The arbitrary disposition of the former daily increased; sometimes his pride was exalted by success, sometimes galled by opposition; the difficulties that could not but attend the arduous tasks he undertook rendered him more harshly tyrannical at home where at least he thought he should exercise an uncontrolled sway; and when he found an opponent even there, and one from whom he never obtained even the show of passive submission, the rage and animosity that sprang up in his breast were desructive of all domestic peace.

Theodora had little disposition to permit any one to usurp her place in a heart over which she looked to exercise unlimited control. She had not forfeited her own self-esteem to become a willing tool of Lord Llarnarmon's ambition, but ather to give full scope to her own. There was no unity of character between Lord Llarnamon and Theodora; though their paths for a time ran

together, she never designed that they should continue parallel; but when she was about to break of from him, and desired to pursue her own separate course unmolested, she found herself compelled to sustain a mighty struggle before she could recover her freedom. What most exasperated Lord Linnarmon, was that it was not her liberty alone that she laboured for; she sought to free her husband's neck from his yoke, and even in this in some measure succeeded. Lord Llarnamon had the mortification of perceiving that his injunctions were rarely obeyed by his son, until he had first consulted Theodora.

It has been said, 'Tutto è grande nel tempie della fortuna, tranne le porte; uopo è spesso entrarvi carponi; and Theodora had bittary Pity it was that she did not proved this truth. love true glory rather than false. She was one born for success;—pity that the object of her pursuit was unworthy. She had an unvielding spirit, an energy that could not be exhausted or wearied; a heart that could not wax cold or indifferent; her desires could not be fickle: her determinations could not falter; her fortitude could not sink. She ought to have been great, but she was little. ought to have been noble, but she had been mean. She ought to have scorned falsehood, but she had dissembled. Yet in spite of these aberrations she still remained so true to her nature, that her heart contemned every action unconsonant to its real nobility; and from the day she entered on the thorny paths of ambition she never knew a happy hour. So vigorous, so enterprising a mind should have been bound by the shackles of the most inflexible principles, and nothing but constant aspirations after higher acquisitions than any to be made on earth, could have sufficed to impart peace and satisfaction to her yearning spirit. Her ardent affections should have been set upon substances, not on shadows; and there could be no happiness for her until she had learnt that of these things for which she toiled and craved, she might 'eat and not be satisfied.'

A short interval of serenity was occasioned by the birth of a son, whom the uproarious rejoicings at Llarnarmon at once proclaimed as the acknowledged heir to his father's fortunes. Lady Theodora had, it is true, in the first part of their acquaintance given her love to Eustace; but from the time that her respect for his virtue was destroyed, her affection also was greatly weakened. Now the springs of tenderness in her heart were again opened, and with a passionate fondness such as she had never yet felt for any human being, her whole affections centered in this child. When she pressed him to her bosom she almost loved his grandfather for what he had effected for him. The pangs of remorse were again despised. Conscience found her feeble voice disregarded. Joy sprang up and exulted, in defiance of all gloomy forebodings, or sad retrospective looks.

Time past on, and brought with it change suc-

ceeding change, for nothing is abiding here; 'yesterday is not to-day to any mortal breathing,' and Lord Llarnarmon in the midst of his self-gratulation was to learn himself, and to evidence to others, by how slight a tenure we hold our worldy goods; how little they are our own, after we have paid the most costly price, even our own souls to make them so. Lord Llarnarmon then, in the midst of self-gratulations and the gratulations of others, fell sick.

Lord Llarnarmon had at the moment, he said 'no time to lose:' he did not think that he was, and had been losing all his time, that he had never yet redeemed any of it for that sole occupation worthy of the heirs of immortality; neither did he know that he was fast approaching the period when for him there would be time no longer. He only remembered that a great political crisis was drawing near, and that if he failed to be at his post all his influence might be for ever overthrown; he had many enemies who sought the opportunity to ruin him, and now they would find it. On the other hand, he was told that if he rose from that bed of sickness and went down to the House, he would surely die. In a state of fury he dismissed his impotent advisers, and was mad enough to summon a bold empiric to his bed-side, under whose directions he was enabled to fulfil his design; but dearly did he pay for his rashness. It is true that the speech which on that night he delivered, in defiance of all the injunctions of his sober-minded

#### CONTRITION.

physicians, was undoubtedly the most brilliant and the most successful of all that he had ever uttered in his whole career. He returned home exulting in his own success, and triumphing over his enemies; but before that speech had run the round of the periodical press, or met the eyes of half of ose whom it was designed to influence, he who ped to reap the glory and the gain, was gathered his fathers.

VOL. II.

# CHAPTER XVII.

My wife—my traitress! Let her not come near me!

Then there woke O'er the dark hour the thought of guiltiness In dread, clear vision . . .

... Then seemed the soul Ebbing into a vast and wandering void, And dark disquietings—a dismal troop— Hung on the rear of life.

THOUGHTS IN PAST YEARS.

YEARS pass on—sickness and sorrow again visit the family of Llarnarmon. Let us return to the Castle, and penetrate with a stealthy step into that chamber where we shall read the mysteries of life and of death, where we shall learn to scorn the feats of ambition, and to dread the pangs of remorse.

It is Eustace that lies there; seemingly on a death-bed. Let us go and place ourselves beside him. The eyes of the dying man are fixed on the setting sun, which declines rapidly; with a thrilling, tremulous accent of despair, he exclaims faintly, for his strength is fast ebbing away (every heart-beat lessens it):

"My last day is come! And this secret will die with me. She will never let it pass my lips;

1d when they are cold, never will she reveal it erself. Oh! that her watchfulness would sleep! h! that any other human being would approach e in this last agony, and catch in my dying acents the recantation of my falsehood! But no -she comes! I see her near. Leave me, reorseless woman! Beautiful beguiler! I have one enough for the love of you; I have sacrificed I peace of mind from the day I knew you. I we done enough for the love of you; let me now something for my own soul, and for Claudine. eavens! what name have I uttered? Has it ower to summon the dead to my side? Yes; I me her coming! How pale, how fair! as that she looked when she died, and I was not ear her: and in her arms I see an infant—it is ly son! Come near; fear not, Theodora sees ot your approach. Come to me; place my child 1 my arms. Entrust him to me. I will right Shake not your head so sadly—look not so istrustfully; hasten to obey me, for I hear her ome. Give me my child, and then disappear uickly, and silently as you came ..... It is too te!" exclaimed the frenzied sufferer, who in his wings had, in spite of his weakness, raised him-If in his bed, and stretched forth his arms wards the phantom he had pictured at his side; it is too late! I see her here: we are lost!"

And he uttered a shriek so piercing, that the try walls rang with it, and Lady Theodora was in a instant at his side.

Her real presence, while it banished all fancia appearances from around him, did not at all diminish the panic that had seized him; while it seemed to drive away the delusions of delirium, \* was unable to calm the terrors of an affrighted conscience. She seated herself beside him with an air of cold, inflexible determination, such # might be assumed to awe a madman; and throughout the night she maintained her position, listening sometimes to his reproaches with stern disregard, but oftener still to the most touching aspirations, the most earnest entreaties to be permitted to unburthen his conscience before he died, and not to slay his eternal soul by sending him to his final socount with all his sins upon his head. And his prayers were in vain! His murmurs, his complaints, and his petitions, had for a while ceased: 1 perfect stillness reigned throughout the chamber; and Lady Theodora, overcome with fatigue, sank unconsciously to sleep. The sick man slowly rose in his bed; he gazed on her with a fixed and eager scrutiny. What havoc had a few years worked in both of them! What a ghastly spectacle was he! While the deep lines of care on the brow lately so smooth and polished—the sharpness of the once delicately chiselled features—the silver threads intermingled with the raven hair—the uneasy slumber, disturbed by many a start and groan, told how much Theodora had suffered, and was suffering.

The countenance of Eustace assumed, as he gazed on her, a mixed expression of cunning and

of cowardice; on his pale, thin lip there came an idiot smile at the thought of stratagem. He gazed, and then he sank back irresolute. Again he rose: stealthily he drew one foot forth, and then the other followed, and he reached the ground. Nerved by terror and by feverish excitement, this man, who speared within a few hours of death, was able to support his emaciated frame, and he arrived at the door with an unfailing step. It was open, and he pessed it, and entered an outer chamber; another moment, and he would have been beyond her power, and Claudine would have been avenged. His hand, his trembling hand, was on the latch of the furthest door, yet he felt unable to raise it. continued his efforts, when they were suddenly arested by the unlooked-for appearance of Lady Theodora, advancing towards him. Her flashing eyes and threatening mien awed him at once into submission: his hand loosened its hold, and watching her stern looks, and unable to withdraw his gaze from meeting hers, he slowly began to retrace his steps, as she advanced, and intercepting his Pesage to the door, and then followed his retreat with unrelaxed determination. Neither uttered a ingle word, not a threat nor an expostulation; terror was in the heart of both; no sooner did Bustace reach his bed, than he fell across it with a Theodora darted forward to catch him, and found him insensible; tenderly she raised him, and replaced him on his couch, and sought with a mady hand every means of restoring him to consciousness. So death-like was the swoon into which he had fallen, that she suddenly stopped short, and suspending her efforts, wildly wrung her hands with gestures of most unspeakable horror. A thought crossed her mind; she flew to the table, and snatching up the mirror, ran with it, and placed it before his lips. The faint cloud of breath that then appeared on it, calmed her utter despair, and by the use of fresh stimulants she at length succeeded in recalling him to life.

She resumed the station which she had never relinquished since the dangerous character of his malady had become known to her, never quitting it but to enter into the outer chamber, from whence she could hear his slightest motion. There she had received all the visits of the physician, and recorded her attention to any demands on it of a peremptory nature.

Towards the dawn of day, Lady Theodora plainly discerned in Eustace an appalling change. Quitting his side, she went into the other chamber and caused the physician to be instantly summoned. She did not lay aside even to him that stern rigidity of manner beneath which she had, from the commencement of her task, veiled the almost unendurable anguish of her spirit. She addressed him thus:

"I have already told you, that if the utmost exertion of your skill can avail to prolong Lord Llarnarmon's existence, there is no reward that you can ask at our hands that shall not cheerfully be given. But I command you not to attempt to deceive me, but to the best of your knowledge to inform me of what appears to you the truth."

The physician, who had found himself hitherto completely baffled in his attempts to read the workings of Lady Llarnarmon's mind, and yet nevertheless had never been able entirely to divest himself of a vague suspicion that some secret trachery was being practised on his unhappy patient, replied angrily, forgetting his usual courtesy, for he had even more than the usual blandness of manner to be found in the members of his profession:

"It has, Madam, as I have told you plainly before, always appeared to me that uneasiness of mind has operated very injuriously in Lord Llarnarmon's case."

Lady Llarnarmon grew, if possible, even paler than she had been before, as she heard these words; but no other change appeared in her. She remained quite motionless for a few moments, and then coming close to him, uttered in a low whisper, but every word of which was audible:

"Is he dying? I insist on knowing."

Her eyes were fixed on the physician as she wited his reply with so intense a gaze, that involuntarily awed by her impressive manner, he replied hurriedly, scarcely knowing what words were pessing his lips:

"He is dying."

" Nothing could save him now?"

" Nothing."

"Then begone!" uttered Lady Llarnarmon in a voice so thrilling, so stern, that the physician started as he heard it.

In another moment she was again beside the bed of Eustace. She found him speechless; his eyes still open had lost every ray of intelligence, and no longer the beseeching gaze spoke daggers to her heart. She now permitted the physician and her attendants to come to her assistance. In a few, in a very few hours the last struggle was over, and the miserable Lady Llarnarmon was home insensible to a chamber as remote as possible from the scene of her late sufferings.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

tless are plaints, and cureless are my wounds.

\* \* \* \* \*

e above woe! grief more than common grief.

SHARSPEARE.

state of Lady Llarnarmon, for many days e fatal termination of her husband's suffers such as to induce the physician who had I him, to remain at the Castle in order to every effort to avert the effects of a grief seemed to threaten her reason, or her life. the relatives of the respective families of mon and Sanvile, whom this terrible visitammoned to the Castle to attend the last that could be paid to the departed, was a an of the name of Dormer, who had married elation of Lady Theodora, and her most intiend both previously to and after her marriage. ly had desired to fly to her support immethat she heard of the dreadful trial that dlen her; but on her arrival at the Castle. nd herself absolutely excluded from her

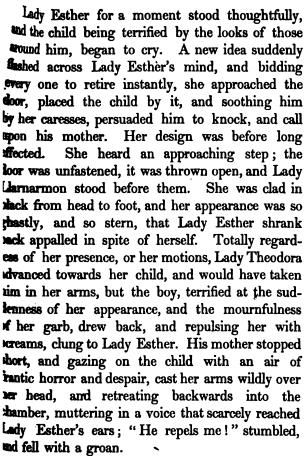
Esther Dormer at first submitted in silence njunctions for her banishment, which she I that Lady Llarnarmon had exerted herself



prove salutary, and arouse her from the stillness of despair in which the physician her as lying. He was so much at a le proceed with one so intractable as Lady Ll that he listened with pleasure to Lady proposal to come to his assistance, and of a farther project which she suggested with her to his mother's bosom, the little whom she had never beheld since hi death. With Mr. Dormer's consent; cordingly proceeded to execute her plan could not set about it without much that as taking the beautiful child in her proceeded to the apartments of her frience

Here an unthought-of and apparent able difficulty met her, and filled her wit The door of the chamber in which was I narmon, was fastened!

"Good God!" exclaimed Lady Esthe alarm; "is it possible that she is allow



Lady Esther started forward, and calling for aid, wised her, and supported her to a sofa. For a few noments after she was placed there, she did not unclose her eyes; but Lady Esther, to her great by, perceived that tears were gathering beneath

their lids, and forcing their way through the long lashes that fringed them. Lady Llarnamou, though evidently retaining consciousness, did not give the slightest token of recognition of Lady Esther, who kneeling beside her with Theodore in her arms, had soothed him into silence, and prevailed on him to let her place him on his mother; bosom. The child, who now knew his mother; made no opposition, and she received his caresses with fondness and tears; at the same time turning away from Lady Esther with evident displeasure. After the lapse of a few minutes, she exerted herself sufficiently to raise herself up, and addressed, in a voice of command, the domestics who still lingered around, saving:

"Leave me, and leave Lord Llarnarmon with me." Her voice was so harsh, that it startled Lady Esther, who felt that her banishment was meant to be included in the sentence, and frightened the child anew; so that as all around retreated, he again screamed to Lady Esther, who had won his little heart by her tender care of him. His mother, for a moment, strove to pacify him; but finding her endeavours vain, she called in a tone of the most passionate anger to one of the servants, and commanded her to take him away. Lady Esther stopped, and turned to the child, who stretched out his little hands to her, when Lady Theodora with furious vehemence, exclaimed:

"No, no, do not touch him; you have taught him to hate me; you shall not take him."

idy Esther, wounded to the quick, and shocked ie anguish with which the unhappy woman is, ran hastily back to her side, and throwing lf on the ground beside her, cast her arms rdy around her, and burst into tears, exing:

Cheodora, Theodora, in what have I offended Do not be so cruel to me. Am I not your friend? If you have forgotten me, and ceased re me—if this terrible blow has obliterated all pry of the past in your heart, still it cannot with me. I am come to be with you, to you, to watch beside you, to be careful of and of your child. I will not ask for the less you showed me in other day's; only do and me away from you. Let me stay."

rese tender words were not without effect. Theodora, who had at first struggled to disge herself, at last passively allowed her friend ain her hand, and suddenly casting herself on psom, burst into a flood of tears that afforded nore relief than any she had yet shed.

om that hour she no longer repulsed Lady r's affectionate advances. She yielded to her r solicitations, and seemed to derive consolation her society. Sometimes, however, her would suddenly change in a manner wholly licable to the shrewdest reader of the human; for who could discern the secret cause of the rable bitterness of spirit that would at times her to recoil upon herself, and rush back into



called on to pay a heavy penalty for hasinful one. My crimes will meet their and the love that made her sympathize rows, will constrain her to share my su

In this frame of mind she would be not having declined all attempts on Lady Esther to form an union of friend them; but when these transitory fits subsided, she would seek her again, ar allow her to pour balm into such of howere visible; but the most deadly wer reach of human eye or aid.

Llarnarmon Castle, as a reside odious to her. Lady Esther, whose very precarious was about to visit the and Lady Theodora lent a willing ear tations to accompany her.

Lady Llarnarmon took her infant s her friend had a daughter of the same the retirement which the health of t the grief of the other, led them to children afforded a most interesting

#### CONTRITION.

nit of sending him to any public school, and mother confided him to the care of a friend of father's, for whom she entertained a well-unded esteem. This was a clergyman, Mr. rdaunt, who, as we have already mentioned, been the companion of Eustace at Lausanne. From that time Lady Llarnarmon varied her se of residence continually, seldom coming to gland, and generally taking up her abode with friends the Dormers, who resided on the contact.

END OF VOL. II.

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# CONSTANCY

AND

## CONTRITION.

S'onesto amor può meritar mercede, E se pietà può quant' ella suole, Mercede avrò.

PETRARCA.

The crims of old, which seemed long dead

Lifts up again its head!

THOUGHTS IN PAST YEARS.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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#### INTERLUDE.

#### ENTER TIME.

I that please some, try all; both joy and terror, Of good and bad; that make and unfold error,— Now take upon me, in the name of Time, To use my wings. Impute it not a crime To me, or my swift passage, that I slide O'er fourteen years, and leave the growth untried Of that wide gap; since it is in my power To o'erthrow law, and in one self-born hour To plant and o'erwhelm custom. Let me pass The same I am, ere ancient'st order was, Or what is now received: I witness to The times that brought them in; so shall I do To the freshest things now reigning; and make stale The glistering of this present, as my tale Now seems to it. Your patience this allowing, I turn my glass, and give my scene such growing As you had slept between.

What ensues
I list not prophecy; but let Time's news
Be known when 'tis brought forth.

WINTER'S TALE.





### CONTRITION.

#### CHAPTER XIX.

There are, sustaining and sustain'd, will prove
A crown of beauty, though they droop alone.
Sweet honey-suckle, she in some airy bower,
With clustering tubes of sweetness and meek crown,
Steals up unseen; then from her leafy tower
Looks forth, and smiles; the elm 'neath many a flower,
Is wondering at a sweetness not his own.

THOUGHTS OF PAST YEARS.

It was a beautiful evening in summer time. The sun was going down, and the curfew was tolling; the birds were all gone silently to bed, except the nightingale, who was just beginning her melancholy song.

Beside the gate that led into a pleasant meadow, smelling fragrantly of the flowers that decked it, and the clematis and roses that bloomed in its hedge, sat a little girl upon the ground. She seemed very weary, for she had clasped her hands upon her knees, and was resting her head upon them, and moving restlessly to and fro, as if by vol. III.

this monotonous action she sought to w

The child looked very young, younger really was; her features were small and de skin was fair and colourless, and her co though sweet and patient, wore an air ( ing melancholy that was painful to bel her brow was the stamp of sufferin thought; her demeanour spoke of sil rance and studied composure. In her g there was all that could impart expression interest, except the language of the eye; when she raised her head the secret of he was told, for sightless were the orbs th beneath the long dark fringe of the s lashes that swept her cheek. At this there were stealing through them large 1 dropped one by one upon her lap.

"He told me to be sure to come hither,'
and now it is eight o'clock, and I ough
home. Perhaps he has forgotten me, as
already!"

With these words her tears fell faster; ing them aside, she continued:

"He never forgot me before; and reaches home, he will miss me, and the come to fetch me back; and he must no I have been crying, for that would grieve

Scarcely had she uttered these word light step was heard fast approaching bounded over the stile, and throwing h he grass beside her, buried his face in her lap, and sohbed aloud.

"Claude, Claude," she cried, touching his head with her little hands, "is it you? Has any one burt—injured you? My father—Roger—tell me, dearest Claude, tell me all, and then forget it."

The boy raised his young face beaming with unpeakable joy, and replied:

"No, Ruth, no, I am not hurt; no one has injured me. These are other tears from those I thed commonly, tears of joy. This is the happiest day I have ever known. Oh, Ruth, I have saved life!"

Clasped in each other's arms, they maintained brief silence, which was first broken by Claude.

"So beautiful a child, Ruth; so lovely-"

"Now, my dear Claude," exclaimed Ruth, "tell me how it happened."

Claude was still too agitated to comply with her request, and taking her hand, they began their walk bonewards. As they went, he gradually related to be all the events which had caused his delay.

"You know," he began, "I had four miles to to this morning on your father's business about the brown horse, and when I got to Westleigh, the Denman had gone to a fair seven miles off, and had taken the horse with him. They wanted the to wait till he returned, but I would not, because I knew your father would be angry if I wasted so much time; and I knew also that he meant me to go before long to old Moore's to see



the trees, and caught me by my cloth to pull me towards the river, and at the thought that I heard a child's voice c You may believe that I followed quie and when I was down by the water sid a little boy had fallen in; and the stre very rapid there, would quickly have p his struggles, had I been a moment said Claude, his voice faltering at the

"And did you jump in?"

"Yes, to be sure, in my clothes, ving an instant, and saved him too, but difficulty, I can tell you; but he was sensible, and not half so strong as I am of his struggles I saved him and mysel how I reached the bank I am sure I. The first thing that I clearly remem number of people crowded round us, owe were both dead (which was not the of us) and cruing out. Heavens I. 'there are the savens I. 'there are the savens I.' 'the savens

is pale, and like wax, and his beautiful, dark, rls hung on his forehead, and his long relashes fell on his white skin. I began he would never more come to life, and I rieved, as if I had loved him all my days. ushed the people angrily aside, and told ot to stand there useless, but to pick and bear him into the nearest house, go instantly to the parsonage to summon o whom he belonged. They all obeyed re being no one else to direct them; and ied him into a cottage and laid him on and procured a hot blanket and such things ld think of, before the arrival of a gentlehom they called Parson Mordaunt, who like a father to the child. He appeared armed, and was greatly pleased with all I e. He said that I was a fine little fellow much sense as spirit," said Claude, ;; "but I did not listen much to what he r I forgot every thing in the delight of the child open his eyes, and look around h much amazement. I was kneeling close holding his hand, and rubbing it. 'Where said he; 'who are you?' and without for an answer, he put his arm round my ad kissed me. Mr. Mordaunt came up nd said: 'Theodore, you are right to emm, for he has saved you from a bad accibut you must be quiet now, and try to 'But tell me first,' said he with such a sweet voice, 'what accident you mean, and is, and why I am here? I do not re 'Why,' I exclaimed, 'all I have to tell is, fell into the river, and I was going by ar you out; and now don't talk any more it is not good for you'; so I stooped ! and kissed him several times; but I w let him speak again although he wi knelt beside him, holding his hand till he asleep. Then Mr. Mordaunt took me a insisted on my clothes being dried, an drinking some wine, and praised me ve though I told him I did not see why, as did not like it. I said it was the dog w done most, to come and fetch me in tha manner, quite like a Christian; and ther curled up on the bed all this time, and said anything to him."

"Poor little fellow!" said Ruth, "he did as long as he had his master, whether praised or not!"

"No, indeed," continued Claude, wanted to leave, on account of your father. have gladly waited to see Theodore awa had I not thought it better not, for yo never like to neglect any of your father's for I never wish to give him the power o me justly. When his blame is not ju bear with it for your sake, Ruth," he as emotion, and Ruth made no reply. told Mr. Mordaunt I must go, and he

would send a messenger to your father; but I said I would send a messenger to your father; but I said I would rather go, and do his business myself, and I would, if he pleased, be with him to-mortow. I dare say he thought me very stubborn. When he saw that I was so resolute, he said: Well, you had better go while Theodore is asleep, for otherwise it would grieve him to part with you. Farewell, my dear boy, I promise that you shall find neither of us ungrateful, nor forgetful of your generous self-devotion."

"I wish so much to see that child again," - mid Claude, after they had walked on in silence some little way; then after a minute's hesitation, he added; "but I don't think I like to go thither."

"Why not?" exclaimed Ruth with surprise.
"Moreover you said that you would."

"So I did....but still....".

"What?"

"Why, I can do nothing more for them now; and if they want any thing with me, they can easily and for me."

"Ah, Claude! I see that you are too proud, and indeed that is not right."

"I would go if Mr. Mordaunt had not used hose words about not being ungrateful. Ruth," notinued Claude, "don't say anything about this, it supper to-night."

"But if you are out of the way to-morrow mornng, father will certainly ask after you."

- "No, no, I will be up an hour or so earlier, and be back before breakfast."
- "But that will be too early to see Mr. Mordaunt."
- "Well, I'll think about it; but do not speak unless I tell you."

With these words they reached the farm-house door, and their first greeting was a sharp repimand for staving out so late. They made no reply, but Claude led Ruth to the table, and placing her by her father, took the next set himself. Opposite to him sat a boy, apperently two or three years his senior, of a most unpleasing countenance. His short straight har was of a dull red: his skin covered with freckles, and also marked with small pox; his keen grey eyes were full of cunning and, at this moment, of greediness, and their strange and incessant twinkling prevented them from ever steadily @countering those of another. This boy was Roger Grierson, the nephew and adopted son of the father of Ruth, who was proud of his abilities, and above all, of the precocity he displayed in driving a bargain. He was an orphan, and had another uncle an attorney in a country town, who was thriving in the world, and to him he was, when old enough, to be apprenticed. Meantime he lived # the farm, and chiefly amused himself by acting the part of flatterer to his uncle, of spy and informer against Claude, towards whom he cherished bitter dislike, and of tormentor to poor little Ruth

1d to every tame animal, or peculiar pet of hers, Lat was about the place. His principal cause f antipathy to Claude had originated in a quarrel ing since past, and by the latter forgotten. Roger, a fit of spite, was one day cruelly beating a ttle boy of the village, younger and feebler than imself, when Claude indignantly fell upon him, and taliated the cowardly act, in no very gentle manner. As to Grierson himself, he had a hard, dry, afeeling face, much of the colour of mahogany; s rigid features could only wear one habitual xpression, and in fact his temper also had one abitual mood, and that was full of asperity and secontent. Avarice was his prevailing passion, estrained only by a certain undeviating principle f honesty, grafted upon pride. His demeanour owards Claude was harsh, severe; he disliked im though he scarcely knew why; a strict scruiny of his own breast would have laid bare to im many a reason for his doing so. The boy ras friendless and dependent, yet dared to cherish undaunted spirit. He had in his infancy been mmitted to Grierson's charge, and a certain sum money deposited with him, which the honesty have mentioned as part of Grierson's character, which him to infringe upon; yet he grudged him is own, and treated him as an intruder who was aly admitted into his family upon sufferance. he natural cruelty of his temper indulged itself this unfortunate child's expense, and he was no loss for means of gratifying it, by keeping

him in total ignorance of every circumstance lating to his birth, family, and future provis and by making him daily more sensible of inability to free himself from the yoke which placed on his neck, he knew not how or Truly this man was scarcely surpassed, in rement of malice, by any of those superlative tyr whose torture chambers now display their himysteries to the eyes of the curious. Has been placed in circumstances equally favou to the development of cruelty, he would not disgraced the fraternity.

Yet Grierson was not incapable of strong tachments. He loved his nephew, who we object of pride. He loved Ruth; she was object of tenderness; and the gentle care fond affection of Claude, which made him idol of her heart, also in a degree temperer father's violence towards him.

Claude's spirit failed when he thought o vealing the history of the day to listeners to prove cold or splenetic; so at last he and retired in silence, each to muse over, and d of an incident so full of interest.

Worn out by exertion, and feeling all exhaustion which follows excitement, Cl who had acted so brave a part in his we hours, in those of sleep seemed deprived of strand fortitude, and repeatedly during the nighthe start up in tears, the shedding of whic would have blushed to own except to Ruth.

on her part, closed not her eyes, but passed the night in musing over every probable or possible influence which this occurrence might exercise on Claude's future fortunes. She pictured to herself the tenderest gratitude on the part of Theodore, with the utmost readiness on Mr. Mordaunt's, to forward the gratification of feelings, equally laudable and natural. She saw Claude rewarded according to his deserts, and emerging from an obscurity unbefitting him. So fearful was she that he would destroy all her fair visions by his proud reluctance to meet the favours of fortune, that at dawn of day she left her bed, and sought his chamber, stealing softly towards the couch which she believed him to occupy; but when she extended her hand, and touched the pillow, and felt here and there for the inmate, she found that he was already departed, whither she could not devise; but there was nothing left for her but patiently to await his return.

Expectation soon grew wearisome; the poor child fell into a sweet and heavy slumber, from which she with difficulty aroused herself to join her father at his breakfast at the usual hour. Still no Claude appeared, and their meal was half over when he entered, hot and fatigued with exercise, and his countenance wearing marks of anxiety rather than of satisfaction. He seated himself as usual beside Ruth, and after a few minutes, found an opportunity of saying to her in a whisper:

"Well, Ruth, I have been there."

The quiet child betrayed no sign of surprise at his words; she did not start, or make any exclamation, but presently she said in a low voice:

" And whom did you see?"

"No one but a servant," replied Claude sorrowfully, in the same under tone.

Roger had gone away, and Grierson also had removed from the table, and Ruth, who like other blind people, possessed the faculty of hearing in a singularly exquisite degree, was aware that they had done so, but still thought it more prudent to disguise her disappointment, and restrain her curiosity till they were quite alone; so she only said:

"Take me into the garden, Claude, before you go out."

And she gave him her hand, and he led her out to a shady arbour, where she often spent her silent hours.

- "How could you," she said, half reproachfully, "expect to see any one at such an hour?"
- "Well, well," replied Claude impatiently, for he was not without an uncomfortable feeling of shame, "I have done all I wished. I have ascertained how Theodore is, and I care for nothing else."
  - "What! not even to see him?"
- "If he wish to see me, it will be no difficult matter to do so."
  - " But tell me at least what you did."
- " I went over thither, and prowled about the place as if I had no business there, for nearly an

ur, getting as near the house and the winws as I could, without attracting observation.
esently, a maid-servant opened the door, and I
proached, and asked her how the young gentlean was after his accident? 'Oh!' she said, 'he
as very well—none the worse for it.' After I
ad talked to her a little, and asked her some
sestions about him, I saw that she began to feel
trious who I was; so then I left her, and came
ack thither."

"What did she tell you about him?"

"Why, he is not Mr. Mordaunt's child, nor lation; he is his pupil, and he is a lord; Lord larnarmon, I think she called him; and he is ving with Mr. Mordaunt, for his father is dead, and his mother not in England. But I must go ow, for your father is already calling for me."

"Well, go; but I am sure that we shall see or ear something of Mr. Mordaunt, or Theodore, efore long."

Claude paused a moment thoughtfully; then Good bye," he cried, and ran away.

### CHAPTER XX.

Heaven never meant him for that passive thing That can be struck and hammered out to suit Another's taste and fancy. He is possessed by a commanding spirit.

COLERIDGE.

THE hopes of Ruth were not to be disappointed. Before noon-day, a gentleman rode up to the gate of the farm, and made inquiries for Claude first, and then for Grierson. From her seat in the arbour, Ruth eagerly listened to his words. though informed that those for whom he inquired were at a distance, the stranger seemed little disposed to depart without seeing them, and he bid one of the labourers go and acquaint them with his desire. Meanwhile, he dismounted from his horse, and entering the garden, approached the spot where Ruth was sitting. How her heart beat as he drew near! She felt sure that this was Mr. Mordaunt. and it seemed to her that she was in the presence of the arbiter of Claude's future fate. With a trembling voice she replied to some trivial question he put to her; he admired the neatness of the garden, and plucking a flower, he said to her:

And what is the name of this plant? It is the which I do not know."

"Sir," replied Ruth in a gentle voice, "I can-

"What! my poor child," exclaimed Mr. Morlaunt, with the most lively compassion, "do you nean that you are blind?"

"Yes, Sir," replied the child; "I have been so ver since I can remember."

He took her hand kindly, and seated himself beside her, asked her many questions concerning this sad affliction, hoping that her replies would suggest some means of affording her relief; but in vain.

Touched by his kindness, and won by the seeming tenderness of his nature to address him without fear, Ruth ventured to say:

"Do you not wish to see Claude, Sir?"

"Yes. Are you his sister?"

"No, we are not related. Claude has no relations. He is an orphan, left quite alone; but he lives with us."

"Has he been with you long?"

"O yes, always."

"Then your father must have been very good him."

Ruth did not answer.

"And Claude," continued Mr. Mordaunt, "is very grateful?"

Very; he does all he can. You saw that yeslay, when he would come home." "Then he has told you all that happened yesterday?"

"He always tells me everything."

"Well, perhaps you can tell me what Claude would really best like me to do, in order to serve him. Is he happy here?"

"O no!" exclaimed Ruth, eagerly, and drawing nearer to Mr. Mordaunt as she spoke; "O no, he is not."

At this moment her quick ear heard approaching steps, and she had only time to say in a low and anxious voice:

"I beg you not to repeat my words to my father or Claude; only do not forget them, for they are quite true."

Grierson now came up, and with him Claude, with a face glowing with pleasure and bashfulness.

- "My dear boy," said Mr. Mordaunt, extending his hand to him, "I was grieved to find that you had been with us so early this morning, and departed without seeing us. You should have come rather later, and then you would have found me."
- "I only wanted to inquire after the young gentleman's health, Sir," replied Claude.
- "What, then you particularly wished not to see us?" said Mr. Mordaunt smiling, for he began to read the workings of Claude's mind on his ingenuous countenance; "is that what you mean?"
  - "O no, Sir," answered Claude with hesitation. Grierson here interrupted them; their conver-

owed him that something had been from him by Claude, and his anger was though he did not choose to betray tience. He saw at a glance that his visitor was a gentleman; and addresswith an air of respectful deference, totally free from servility, he begged to it circumstances had procured him the this visit. Mr. Mordaunt, without exhe surprise which he felt at finding him f the occurrence of the preceding day, ated it, with many encomiums on the f Claude, which he plainly perceived were with repugnance. This remark caused n to mix with the strong feeling of intely inspired by Claude; and he felt an sire to be able to render him some maice. in return for his brave and generous In order to do so, he resolved to learn of the boy himself, and to consult with what mutual exertions they could make o advance his future welfare. Accordr a brief discourse with Grierson, he ly requesting him to permit Claude to , him home that day, for the gratification re, who was most anxious to see him. Claude's delight, Grierson complied with st without an objection; and Mr. Mornounting his horse, bid him prepare to y, or to follow him. would wait for me one minute, or set

out without me, though I am on foot, I won overtake you before you reach the end of t lane," said Claude eagerly; and hardly waiting an answer he disappeared like lightning. He fl to Ruth, and embracing her warmly, in a f scarcely coherent words, told her the joy wi which his heart was overflowing, and received return many injunctions to speak with perfect ca dour to Mr. Mordaunt, and treat him as a tr friend; and many a fond wish she expressed th this occurrence might lead to happy results. few minutes he arrived, panting and speechless Mr. Mordaunt's side: he slackened his pace to gir Claude time to recover his breath, and began t converse with him. His high spirit and daring had obtained for him Mr. Mordaunt's admiration and the ardent affection which the blind girl dis played for him, seemed to prove that he had! tender and compassionate heart, while Grierson's countenance was so unpleasant that the dislib which he evidently nourished towards the boy rathe told in his favour. Besides these circumstances it was impossible but that the extreme beauty o his youthful person should awaken an interest i The small, finely-shaped head, and well cut features, seemed to speak an origin that coul not be vulgar. His skin, in spite of constant & posure to every inclemency of weather, was singu larly fair; his hair of the brightest gold; and his broad, smooth brow, and large, liquid, grey eyes had an expression of pensive thoughtfulness, affording a striking contrast to his age, and giving a painful impression that, though the brightness and beauty of youth were there, the joyousness of youth was unknown, and teaching a melancholy truth, that, alas! life is not always 'pleasant in its morning.'

Mr. Mordaunt's first question was:

"Shall you be glad to see Theodore?"

"Very," answered Claude, in a tone of deep feeling.

"Then why did you not suppose that he must also wish to see you?"

Claude was silent for a moment, and then replied in a voice at once composed and dejected:

"That is very different."

"How so? The greater wish ought certainly to be on his side."

"It is very natural for me," said Claude, "to wish to see so sweet a child again; but why should he wish to see me? I can do nothing more for him; and besides, he has enough to love and serve without me."

"So then you mean that, if you were Theodore, it would be a matter of indifference to you whether you did, or did not see your preserver any more?"

Claude made no reply to this inference, but cast down his eyes awhile; presently he drew nearer to Mr. Mordaunt, and venturing to look up imploringly into his face, he said:

"I do not like to be thanked. I wish, oh!

how much I wish, that you would, both of you, forget, and not say any more to me about this accident!"

Mr. Mordaunt replied, looking kindly upon his young companion:

"I will tell Theodore your request, and he will comply with it, I dare say, as well as he can; but do not forget that he will nevertheless continue to feel as you would, I am persuaded, were he in your situation, and you in his."

Relieved from much of his embarrassment by this promise, Claude was soon able to converse with all the lively intelligence natural to him; and Mr. Mordaunt, who perceived that a peculiar delicacy of feeling and a shy reserve of character inclined him to shrink, as the sensitive plant recoils from our touch, from any direct inquiries into his thoughts and sentiments, endeavoured rather to elicit them in the general course of conversation, without allusion to his own individual case.

When they reached Dinmore, they found the little Theodore watching their approach with the utmost eagerness; the lively and affectionate joy with which he welcomed his wished-for guest, went to the heart of poor Claude, so little used to be the object of fondness and affection; and bursting into an irrepressible flood of tears, he cast himself into the arms opened to receive him.



#### CONTRITION.

## CHAPTER XXI.

A gentle heart, a soul affectionate,
A joyous spirit filled with generous thought,
And genius heightening, ennobling all.

SOUTHEY.

In quel sembiante un non so che ritrovo Che non distinguo, e non mi giunge nuovo.

METASTASIO.

MR. MORDAUNT left the two children together, a few hours' fellowship sufficed to establish ween them a confidence and intimacy that, at a happy age, would have been the fruit of the rcourse of years. Before the hour of parting, little secrets of either heart were no longer mown to the other, and Theodore ae to the determination that Claude must cerily leave the stern, unfeeling Grierson, and e up his abode with Mr. Mordaunt, to share studies and his sports. As Theodore stood no awe of that gentleman, whom he loved with warmest affection, he manfully resolved to tress himself immediately to him on the sub-. Nor had he a hard task to accomplish, . Mordaunt being himself greatly disposed to cue from ignorance and oppression, one whose youthful mind appeared to him to be endowed with no ordinary faculties. In fact, almost the very same plan had occurred already to himself; though be would rather not have suggested it to the poor boy who was the object of it, until he had ascertained the possibility of carrying it into effect; for he saw that even the events of the two last days would be sufficient to render him, unless he was very inferior in heart and mind to what he conceived him to be, far more sensible of the painfulness of his situation, and far more incapacitated for the endurance of it than before.

Still, as this was but the inevitable consequence of unforeseen, unplanned events, he could not help regarding it as an opening made by the hand of Providence to free from servitude a spirit formed for higher destinies; and it seemed w him that he could not refuse scope for action to the generous and grateful disposition of his pupil's heart, without falling short of a duty committed by Heaven to his hands. Besides, there was something mysterious in the charm which the countsnance of Claude possessed for him. When he gazed on his face, vague and dreamy thoughts of the past floated before his mind's eye; and yet be could by no means trace the way by which this child was linked with such associations. plicable as this feeling was, it strongly disposed him not to lose sight of him again. He thought that, even should he find himself mistaken in his hasty conception of the boy's character and capacity,

could not but be for his good to be renoved, for a time at least, from one who, for
ome reason or other, certainly evinced no kindness
f feeling towards him, and he therefore deternined to accompany Claude home the next day,
nd at once to enter upon the subject with Grieron, and learn what were his future intentions
and wishes with regard to the boy, before he enouraged him to cherish vain hopes, or dream
oright dreams.

Mr. Mordaunt had learned from Ruth that Claude was an orphan; but he had not supposed that there was any secrecy observed with regard to the circumstances of his birth, until he learned from Theodore that this it was that weighed most heavily on his mind, in spite of his youth. Not only had he never known his parents, but there were those around him who were not slow to discover and to declare, what Grierson would perhaps more willingly have concealed, that a mystery hung over him which he could not solve, and it was attended with imputations of shame, which were more than once cast in his teeth, and of which he could neither ascertain the truth, nor the falsehood. This singular state of things heightened Mr. Mordaunt's interest, and in spite of his sober age, suggested wild and romantic ideas to his mind, of a parentage above the boy's present station, and of future discoveries to be made; though while he mused on these fancies, he could not but laugh at himself for indulging in such castle-building. Anxious to serve Claude more effectually, he calle him to him, and set off with him for Grierson farm. Claude's heart was too full of conflicting hopes and fears to allow him to speak, and M. Mordaunt felt too much for his ill-concealed agrication to attempt to force him into conversation; but when they were within sight of the farm, he halted, and turning to Claude, said:

"Claude, I must clearly understand you on one point; do you really wish to come to me?"

Claude strove in vain to speak; tears gushed from his eyes, and sobs choked his utterance. Catching Mr. Mordaunt's hand in his, he pressed it impetuously to his lips, and muttered in an almost inaudible voice:

"You know that I do."

Mr. Mordaunt said no more, and they soon arrived at the gate of the farm-yard. Grierson came to meet them, and after a few brief words, Mr. Mordaunt took him aside, and expressing the complete satisfaction which Claude's conduct had afforded him during his short visit, he continued:

"I assure you, Mr. Grierson, that the signal service that this boy has rendered to my young ward, has filled us both with a lively interest in him; added to this, his countenance and bearing are so prepossessing, I may say, so noble, that I feel fully disposed to aid my young pupil in his desire to reward, by some permanent benefit, the counge to which he is indebted for the preservation of

During the few hours that I have had me, I think that I have observed in readiness of apprehension, and such a learn, as convince me that any one who de him with the means to do so, will not it his reward; and I would willingly, with ussion, allow him for the present to share ictions bestowed on my pupil. Accordprogress he shall make we shall soon be discern what line in life it would be most for his advantage to select; nor when his choice is made, be impeded in by any obstacles which our assistance There are some particulars respectn which I must request you to give me nation that it may be in your power to nd I doubt not that you feel an interest phan you have hitherto protected, which induce you to forgive me for thus trespon your time."

had made no open, nor intended com-Grierson's conduct; it was only from untary betrayal of his feelings that Mr. t had imbibed an idea of its harshness; thought it unwise to manifest an exof anything but what was fair and genenis part, until he should be actually forced. To his final words, Grierson replied a grim smile, and a silent bow, and Mr. Mordaunt to resume the conver-

и.

"In the first place, with respect to his birth, it has hitherto been involved in mystery, which, young as he is, has already proved a fertile source of pain. Are you willing to confide to me any circumstances relating to it with which you are acquainted, even though you may think it injudicious to make such communications at present to him?"

With a darkened countenance, Grierson slowly replied:

"I have no information whatever to give you on this point. It is in vain to seek it in this quarter, now or at any later period."

"Am I to understand that you are unwilling or unable to gratify my desire of ascertaining this point?"

"Allow me, Sir, to say that I think my reply he been sufficiently explicit to exempt me from any farther prosecution of this subject."

Silence followed this rebuke; Grierson seemed awaiting any further inquiries with impatience, and Mr. Mordaunt, defeated but not discouraged, continued:

: "When he was thrown upon your hands at so early an age, was any provision for the future made for him, or is he wholly indebted to you for his support?"

"No. A certain sum of money was placed in my possession, part of which has been already consumed, and of the remainder I intend to make such use as I shall think most beneficial for the boy's interest."

"May I hope that if either he or I shall make my future suggestion or request with regard to be disposal of it, that we shall not find you unvilling to listen to it?"

"The property is the boy's, not mine. If he boose other friends instead of me, he may as well here it at their disposal."

Grierson spoke these words with a bitterness but filled Mr. Mordaunt with aversion; anxious terminate their conversation, he said:

"Then Claude has your permission to remove my house?"

"I do not even wish it to be asked. If he hinks he can better his fortunes, let him go. I in nothing by his stay, and lose nothing by his eparture. Though he show me no gratitude, peraps he will show you more."

As he spoke he laid his hand on his hat, and semed impatient to depart. Mr. Mordaunt, much imatisfied with the man, and yet not willing to manifest displeasure, followed him, saying:

"Then I will tell him that I have arranged for im to join Lord Llarnarmon."

"Lord Llarnarmon!" exclaimed Grierson, for the first time startled out of his provoking comture; "is your ward Lord Llarnarmon?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Mordaunt, in some astonishment. Grierson's countenance changed, and he nuttered in a half-audible voice:

"Surely this does look like the hand of Provi-

This momentary loss of self-command greatly augmented Mordaunt's curiosity; however, Grierson quitted him abruptly, without addressing any further remark to him; but before his departure he returned, and begged him not to hold any further communication with Claude on the subject, as he would himself inform him of his intentions with regard to him.

## CHAPTER XXII.

I gain nothing under him but growth. The something at nature gave me, his countenance seems to take from :.

AS YOU LIKE IT.

Friends now fast sworn,
Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,
Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal and exercise,
Are still together; who twin, as 'twere, in love
Inseparable.

CORIOLANUS.

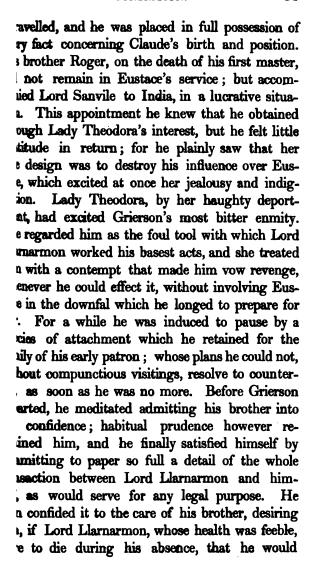
THE emotion betrayed by Grierson, on learning at the unacknowledged orphan, placed under his re, was now by an unlooked for accident to thrown into close contact with a brother, ignoat of their relationship, and the innocent usurper his rights, will not surprise our readers. Even hard heart was touched by such an occurrence; d he paused in consternation, scarcely able to olve how to proceed. He could not perceive that secrecy he was bound to observe, was enagered by the communication thus wonderfully ened between the brothers. Though he enterned a dislike to the boy, (whose unprotected uation, instead of giving him an additional claim kindness, had rendered him often the victim of relty; for Grierson was one of those 'whose con-



retributive dispensation which imposed benefactor on one, who was the in inflicting so great an injury; a superof thwarting the designs of Providen his mind, and he finally determined take their natural course without the obstacle in their way.

Let us now retrace our steps, and readers of the circumstances that thus a erson the arbiter of the fate of Claude

When the old Lord Llarnarmon chis servant, Roger Grierson, to fine secret abode for the discarded heir, a brother of his own, of a hard, stemature; on whose determined obstir penetrable secrecy he knew he could man had far too much sagacity, his suspicions quickly aroused by the insisted upon, and still more by the secretary of the secretary of





parture, the death of Lord Liamarmon ( Grierson, not without curiosity, at o: the packet confided to his care; b quainted with its contents, delayed to further. His principles were conforn standard, and tinctured by his intrinsi but he had a sort of dogged honesty wh that Lord Llarnarmon's death did not from his oath of secresy; and while I ing the fruits of it, he did not feel inc the doubly treacherous part proposed b Lord Llarnarmon and his father he benefactors; and he was not dispo the helpless orphan, or to gratify Re nant hatred at their expense. He t aside the paper, resolved for the preto allow its contents to remain in secresy. A few years afterwards, I returned to England, and through hi that the elder Grierson had fallen a

to avail himself of his labour, and quieted his conscience by professing an intention, when he should come to riper years, of placing at his disposal the money belonging to him, and leaving him free to choose his own walk in life. He could not, however, without compunction, reject Mr. Mordaunt's offer to bestow an education on him; an offer made in consequence of his noble exertion. Still, when he remembered how fondly his helpless child, Ruth, was attached to her young companion, and thought how it would grieve her to part with him, he almost came to a determination to forbid his departure. But the only earnest supplications addressed to him on the subject, were those that came from the lips of Ruth, (for the boy would not plead for himself, though he felt strongly disposed to call in question Grierson's authority to detain him;) and so passionately did she entreat her father to consent to their mutual wishes, that he finally acquiesced. Ruth then sought permission to acquaint Claude with his final determination, but this her father refused; and Ruth seeing that it would be unwise to press him further, retired silently, fearing that he would bestow the favour he was about to grant, so ungraciously as to deprive it of half its power to awaken gratitude; nor was this fear unfounded. It seemed as if Grierson had a Positive antipathy to giving pleasure, or conferring happiness; and that if necessitated to do so, he strove to compensate himself by an ebullition of more than ordinary wrathful coarseness and brutality. Accordingly that evening as they sat at supper, he informed Claude, with cool and biting sarcasm, that he had parted with him to Mr. Mordaunt, to be an humble playmate to the little Lord; and "I imagine," he said, "that you will find it not less irksome to humour the caprices of a spoilt child, than to learn in my service occupations befitting a man."

Claude's colour mounted high at this insulting speech, particularly as Roger chimed in with a laugh of derision, which however the fiery glass of Claude's eye quickly silenced. Turning to Grierson, he asked in a constrained voice:

"When am I to go to Mr. Mordaunt, Sir?"

"What!" exclaimed Grierson, with a sudden burst of anger; "are you already so impatient, young Sir, to quit the only home you have ever known? You have yet to learn that you may go farther and fare worse, and before long may perhaps repent your graceless haste."

Claude bit his lip, but for Ruth's sake, still kept silent.

"I hope," added Grierson rising, and violently pushing his seat from him, "that none so ungrateful may ever darken my threshold again."

At these words Claude also started up, and with a bold impetuosity, which amazed his hearers by its novelty, exclaimed:

"Gratitude! Why do you talk of gratitude? Am I to be grateful for your scoffs, your threats, your blows, your unjust blame, or your cred

mockings? You speak of service. How do I we it you? You have yourself told Mr. Mordant that I am no dependent on your charity. If you have paid yourself for the bread I have eaten and the bed I have lain on, in what am I your debtor? Do you not rather owe me something for that labour of which I have not been paring, and which you, for some time past, have not accupled to exact?"

Grierson was so astonished at the sudden boldmes that animated the boy, that he let him proceed thus far in silence, and when he was about to answer, Claude, after an indignant pause, broke forth again before Grierson could speak, and straimed:

"But all that is past I had forgotten, and would have gone forth from you in love and gratitude, if you had only dismissed me kindly!"

And drawing Ruth towards him, Claude rested his head on her shoulder and burst into tears, though he would fain not have wept before Grier-ton or Roger.

"Oh! father," exclaimed Ruth in a voice both mournful and imploring; "Claude is not ungrateful, and you must not try him with unkindness now that he is about to leave us."

Claude hastily brushed away his tears, and tembracing Ruth, he said:

"For your sake, Ruth, I will be grateful yet."

Whether it was that Grierson was touched by his display of affection towards his child, or that his heart smote him at the deserved rebuke bestowed by the orphan, he now retired in sullen silence, which he continued to maintain with regard to Claude's departure, from that night til it took place. When he took leave of him however, he dismissed him without a single expression of kindness.

But from the hour of his entrance into his new home, Claude never again felt the want of kindness and affection. The happiness of both the children was greatly augmented by the companionship now established between them. extreme delicacy of Theodore's health from his infancy, had rendered it quite impossible to send him to a public school; his education therefore was carried on by Mr. Mordaunt, who was his guardian as well as preceptor, and who for the sake of his early friend, as well as for the child's own engaging qualities, watched over him with a parental tenderness, and now rejoiced in having obtained for him a companion, whose high spirit, manly character, and excellent capacity rendered him alike suited to share his studies and his sports, and to rouse him to salutary exertions of body and mind.

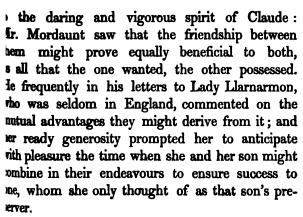
For a time the children were satisfied to love each other, and their mutual desire to please Mr. Mordaunt was their greatest incentive to application to their studies. But as they grew older, Theodore began to frame plans leading to future distinction for his humble friend, such as

#### CONTRITION.

hould preclude the necessity for a separation in fter life, which he could not bear to contemplate, and which yet would be inevitable, if Claude reurned to the low sphere in which he had found im. Such an idea was equally repugnant to Mr. Mordaunt, who could not bear to think that bilities so excellent, and which he had cultivated with so much care, were to remain 'mute and inglorious.' By every means in his power he timulated Claude's eager exertions, and if Claude's heart was now for the first time satisfied, so also was his inquiring mind. The delights to be found in the cultivation of the intellectual faculties had been unimagined by him, until as they were mulally developed in himself, he began to enjoy the pleasures they afford, and to discover that they were of all others the most congenial to his taste. Theodore watched his rapid proficiency with the greatest interest; his desire was to see him, not his equal, but his superior; he seemed to take a pride in seeing Claude surpass him. When he did well, his eyes would beam with increased joy, if Mr. Mordaunt pronounced that Claude had done better. He was content to be outdone by him in every thing but gratitude. renerosity, and love. The affection that had from the first meeting sprung up between the two brothers grew with their growth, and every year that their hearts more firmly together. The tendeness of Theodore's nature responded to the enthusiastic devotion of Claude's, to whom he looked up, as he might have done, had he known that in him he had an elder brother and natural protector. He marked all his attainments as so many pledges of the future honours and fame he so eagerly desired for him to acquire; and he longed for a day to come when the talents and merits of his friend would meet with a general acknowledgment, and he should see him freed from the oppressive recollection that,

He was a kind of nothing, titleless Till he had forged himself a name."

Mr. Mordaunt found that the sum of money in Grierson's hands was adequate to defraying the expenses of the usual routine of education; and it was resolved that he should enter the university at the same time as Theodore, though he was two years his senior. His want of early education had of course for a time retarded his progress, and the advantages of continuing together they were both unwilling to resign. Whenever Theodore visited his mother or his friends, Claude remained with Mr. Mordaunt; and during the six years which he spent with him, he obtained as firm a hold on his heart as did his brother. In fact, though the wide difference between their characters gave a different tone to Mr. Mordaunt's feelings towards them, it would not have been possible for him to declare which he regarded with most tenderness. The timid disposition and feeble health of Theodore made support more needful to him than



When Theodore reached his eighteenth year, his nother resolved to return to England, and take up her permanent residence in the Castle of his interest in the furtherance of his interests, she hoped to be able to banish the memory of past events, and to alence the voices of the dead, that disturbed her test when within those walls. Theodore went to neet her at Llarnarmon, and Claude received a peedy invitation to follow him thither, and remain the should commence together their college areer. In accordance with his own eager wish and Mr. Mordaunt's approbation, Claude prepared to obey his friend's summons.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

Lowliness inexpressive, and deep l Sur l'avenir douteux, les vagues pers Les plans de destinée, et de vie en co Cette fraternité de deux êtres en un.

CLAUDE did not leave Dinmore wi ing visit to Ruth, whom he had not from time to time, and who, he feare bitterly the want of these accustom her cheerless solitude. When he n departure, she listened with her us sympathy, rejoicing in his pleasure, a her own pain. She felt implicit con assurance that she should

> Hear of him still, and never of him a But what was like him formerly.

Ha took loom of how full of incli

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# of. How often in her loneliness had she

If she could meet him ut once a-day, it would unclog her heart f what lay heavy on it!

w, the satisfaction his not unfrequent visits parted, was to be wholly resigned, probably!

Mordaunt, though he had at heart no wish than Ruth to damp the ardour of 1g pupil, did not think it right to dismiss thout a few words of advice with respect entire change of position he was about to He pointed out to him that he would now, first time, be made practically sensible of inct spheres in which he and Lord Llarwere placed, and touched on the difficulty d experience with regard to those around not with regard to his friend and patron, staining a manly independence free from pride, or in enjoying the pleasures of fantercourse, without incurring the imputation ity.

le listened to his words with becoming e, but, even on after reflection, felt unable eive doubt or apprehension. With regard dore, he could as soon have shrunk from reliance on the strength of his own love odore, as on that of Theodore for him. 5 only on this view of the subject, all fear pointment fled, and he returned to antici-



park, filled with noble forest-trees, the hallowed growth of years; but Cl time to regard with admiration the his friend, nor to raise a querulous why some are

> Favourites of Fate, In Fortune's lap carest,

and others left in 'life's low vale heart was bounding with joy at the each succeeding moment lessened the tween them. At length they reach and Claude hastily sprang down, at to his companions of a day. He for and horse awaiting his arrival. He in every manly exercise, and the was sprang into his seat, and managed the steed, at once taught the attendanche was a person to be respected. A mile brought him to the Castle, a occupied as his mind was, he coul from many bursts of admiration at

y greeting sounded in his ear, no Theodore seye. His heart sank within him, and he t that he had indeed come too soon. How he be wanted there? The momentary bestowed on the magnificence that reigned, made him feel that Lord Llarnarmon not be the simple Theodore who had been mpanion in Mr. Mordaunt's secluded vicar-Such thoughts as these rushing for the first to his mind, agitated it so as to render him the repeated inquiries of the servant for directions. At last, rousing himself forcibly is unpleasant reverie, he asked when Lord rmon would enter.

on, Sir, I believe. Within an hour. There rge party at the Castle this evening, Sir. eat hall is prepared for dancing, and many are invited from different parts of the

readers must not laugh at my poor hero, if, th's sake, I confess that these words made ish himself at Dinmore once again, far from of splendour and festivity, for which he mself so little prepared. But the Fates all things for us; and but little time was I him for the indulgence of dispiriting fears. It is had the domestic left him, when he heard proaching sound of a familiar step and voice, asped in the warm embrace of Theodore, re-assured that he had been looked for as , and was welcomed as heartily, as he could esired.

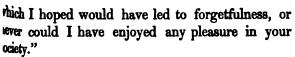


secret of his friend's embarrassment.

"But no," he said, "I have the pleasanter arrangement. You are your journey, and would, I have annoyed by meeting so many strandine together in the library, and witimes, until we are interrupted by mee to open the ball, which, I assist treaties would induce me to anno day of your coming was decided."

Claude warmly expressing his friend's kindness, supplicated him to retreat entirely from these pro and spend the evening in seclusion would hear of no excuse; and besit that Claude must positively be promother, nor sleep a night under the having first received a welcome frone, who had only learnt his name and the life of her child.

"Nay, my dear Theodore," sa



"Well," replied Theodore, "I threaten a daily currence to this subject if you in any way thwart ly wishes, or venture to retreat when I bid you wance. Appear this evening without compulon, and all shall go well with you, but dread the fects of further opposition to my will, which, I am you, is here sovereign. I have many reasons wishing you to be present to-night. Above I, I wish to make you known to our cousins, the formers, who are here."

So saying, he left him. In the course of their inversation, during their private repast, Theodore gain mentioned the Dormer family, who were at resent inmates of the Castle.

"What relationship do they bear to you, Theolore?" asked Claude.

"Lady Esther Dormer is my mother's cousin. It uncle succeeded to the Sanvile title on the bath of her brother. In our childhood, Venetia and I were playfellows; but her mother's health as long been incurably bad, and they have resided a the continent for many years. Lady Esther as very anxious to accompany them to England his year, when Mr. Dormer's presence was indiscussable here; but she found the journey quite imacticable. During my mother's residence in ply, she was always near them, which was a great wantage to her young cousin, as it provided her

with a female friend when her mother we to accompany her into society. This intercourse has been productive of the attachment between them. But who knows Venetia, and loves her not? Yo in her a combination of modest dignity, and amiability, that render her unspeakaling."

Here Theodore stopped short, and tafter parted to prepare for the further the evening.

# CHAPTER XXIV.

Ah! de quel souvenir viens-tu frapper mon cœur!

Fra tanti amici lumi Una nube lontana mi dispiace La qual temo che 'n pianto si risolve.

PETRARCA.

In spite of all the delight Claude had anticited, and had really found in rejoining Theodore, had still a sinking at the heart, he scarce knew by, like that sense of loneliness which so often the spirit on entering a crowded city where are strangers, or on first planting the foot on a eign land, or on entering a happy, merry circle, ere all are familiar with all, except with you. I felt, though he indignantly repelled the feeling a avowed, a kind of prophetic dread that he was tually robbed of his friend.

He entered the brilliant ball-room alone, and ked around in blank dismay, striving in vain to ch sight of the only familiar face he could hope discern, that of Theodore. His eye glanced ough the crowd, and at length fell upon him was in search of. But Claude paused for a ment before he made him sensible of his apach, for he felt an intuitive conviction that the utiful girl to whom Theodore was speaking

could be no other than Miss Dormer; and wished, while yet unrecognized, by a silent unobserved scrutiny, to satisfy the feelings of i rest and curiosity which Theodore had excited him regarding her.

And now Claude gazed in enraptured adm tion on beauty, how different and how sup to any that had ever yet met his eye! He ma her graceful form, her eloquent countenance brilliant fairness of her pale skin, the classic gance of her features, the softness of her l eyes, and the profuse and waving tresses chesnut hair gathered together, and confine the back of her head, leaving its faultless line and that of her swan-like throat, clearly fined. He felt an inexplicable pang as he sl turned his eyes from her, and letting them on Theodore, beheld the tender air with which was listening to her. Was it possible that was speaking of him? for Theodore turning qu towards the spot where he was standing, her, and advanced to welcome him with as of affection, and taking his arm, exclaimed:

- "Come, let me present you at once to my ther; and then, Claude," he said, lowering his w "I must show my cousin to you."
- "Was it not Miss Dormer you were just now?" asked Claude with some embanment.
- "Yes," replied Theodore, evidently too pre-occupied to remark the hesitation of manner.

As Claude followed his friend, he saw in advance f them, a lady of a most commanding demeanour, and singular beauty. As she was no longer young, e immediately concluded that this was Lady Jarnarmon. She received Theodore's introduction with the utmost graciousness; and though she at nce expressed the gratitude which her passionate ove for her son caused her to feel, in the warmest erms, it was done with such an appearance of incerity, and with so much delicacy, that even Claude could listen almost without a wish to cut hort her discourse. Nor did she neglect to gratify Theodore by some flattering encomiums which she bund time to utter on the manner and appearance If his rustic friend; and dismissing him with an injunction to commence the dance with his cousin. he added with a courteous smile:

"You shall leave Mr. Lermont (such was the same borne by Claude) with me. Though all are trangers here, he must not for a moment consider me as one. It is Theodore's mother who peaks, and she would not be more strange to him han Theodore himself."

The warmth of this speech satisfied Theodore, the thanked her with delight; and after he left tem, Lady Llarnarmon continued to converse ith Claude with so much easy grace and conderate kindness, that he soon found himself reved of half the embarrassment under which he id laboured, and able to bear his part in the contrastion with an intelligence and self-possession VOL. III.

equally free from presumption, and from maure honte.

But as they continued to discourse, he perceive or fancied that he perceived, an expression of pe and doubt steal over Lady Llarnarmon's face; appearance was vague, and quickly passed away but still she seemed uneasy, and unwilling to the She raised her hand to her her to him more. and drew it across her brow, as if to smooth aw the contracting frown that came there unbidde and against her will. This singular change, thou slightly manifested, alarmed Claude's sensiti feelings, and he began an almost precipitate r treat. But Theodore did not leave him long himself: no sooner was the dance ended, than lear ing Miss Dormer beside his mother, he sought his again, and with the kindest solicitude strove lead him to share in the amusements of the ever ing; but Claude assured him, that the novelty the scene was quite sufficient to occupy him, an that he would willingly decline, at least for the evening, any introduction to the crowd that su rounded him.

"Forget me to-night, Theodore," he said, "allet to-morrow be mine."

Theodore seeing that this request was made is sincerity acquiesced in it; but though Lord List narmon quitted him, Claude was not long left contemplation, (though perhaps, few places a better suited to it than a station in an unknown crowd) for a gentleman approached him, and see

ing himself beside him, gave evident indications of a wish to converse. He was of a middle age, and his countenance was remarkably handsome and benevolent; his keen dark eyes sparkled with animation, and appeared to suffer nothing to escape their notice. In his deportment was an aristocratic ease, and in his manner rather an air of patronage, but demonstrated with too much good nature to be galling or oppressive.

"I see," he said, addressing Claude in a voice that was peculiarly agreeable, "I see that you are quite as great a stranger in this part of the world as I am. You appear to know no one here; and though I now know half the people in the room, there are but few with whom I have had more than an hour's acquaintance. You will perhaps think that I have an intuitive knowledge of persons if I tell you at once who you are. I believe you would be rather at a loss to give me so much information with regard to myself."

"Yes, indeed, Sir," replied Claude; "but I think that it is more surprising that you should be able to tell my name, than that I should not be able to tell yours. If you really are at all acquainted with me, you must be aware that here I am, equally unknowing and unknown."

"At present you are: but you will not long remain either the one or the other. Your countenance alone speaks so far. Well, your first introduction is into the gay world, but depend upon it, both for your happiness and your suc-

cess, your next ought to be into the busy worl But I dare say that you think this looks a very pleasant one," said his new friend, looking aroun with an air of good-humoured satisfaction. "L me, however," he continued, "tell you one thing This is, or ought to be, relaxation, not occupation All those here who deserve to be here, who are worth knowing, will to-morrow have better, wise, and more important affairs to attend to. Those who have not, will to-morrow be sick, wear, miserable, and destitute of all that life and spirit which now appear so charming."

The silent attention which Claude gave to these remarks, caused the stranger to pause, and laugh heartily, exclaiming:

"I am not much given to moralize; and those who know me best, would laugh at me if they caught me doing so. Only there is something about you that has rather taken my fancy. I don't think that you will ever do to be kept tame at Llarnarmon Castle, which was the sort of thing that I expected. You must get your friend to push you on in the world, and don't let him keep you near him. That will not do for either of you."

- "And yet," said Claude, "why not?"
- "Would you like a life of dependence?"
- "No, not in the sense in which you use the word; but we may be mutually dependent on each other's affection: and it is no degradation, but rather honour, to be bound to him by ties of love."

The stranger smiled, but only said:

"You are both very young now; in a few years you will learn what the reality of dependence is, and will be able to tell others whether it be expedient to pay such a price for any benefits that may accrue. I think not."

"I am sure that I agree with you!" exclaimed Claude eagerly, "but you do not understand me. I will not be a dependent; but if, in spite of the difference of our ranks, Theodore loves me, and thooses me as a friend, I may surely enjoy his friendship without compromising my own dignity."

"Enjoy his friendship, and the fruits of it;" replied his new acquaintance with provoking coolless; "call dependence, independence; perhaps, both he and you will agree to do so. You will find this difficult."

"Not impossible," returned Claude, not without

His companion seemed to wish to change the abject, for his reply was irrelevant to it.

"At your age," said he, "the word 'imposible' had no place in my vocabulary."

"And since then you have been forced to ad-

"I am certainly forced to allow it to recur frener than pleases me, though I still cherish a dief that our learning to anticipate failure is reatly the cause why it comes. After one or two cavy falls, we are too disheartened to rise again ith that elasticity, and vigour, and undaunted spirit which perhaps would the next time have carried us through. We fail again because we failed before; we become habituated to do so, and then there is no buoyancy of hope left. I believe that, could we derive fresh determination from every defeat, as Antheus did fresh strength every time he touched his mother-earth, very few obstacles would be insurmountable."

"Your theory is very congenial to my nature," answered Claude, "so perhaps I may succeed."

While they were talking thus, Claude suddenly caught Lady Llarnarmon's eye fixed on him, with an expression so intensely painful, her whole countenance wearing

# The stony air Of mixed defiance and despair,

that he actually recoiled from her gaze: he felt the blood rush back to his heart; he knew that he changed colour; and his inquisitive companion did not fail to remark the change, and to inquire if he were ill. Claude murmured some excuse, and with an effort recovered himself. The stranger, following the direction his eyes had taken, saw nothing but Lady Llarnarmon, smiling and bland.

"You have seen Lady Llarnarmon for the first time to-night?" he said.

"Yes," replied Claude, hoping to learn something concerning this singular lady; and to is great satisfaction, his friend continued:

"You will find her a woman of most unlimited

enerosity and warm feelings. She has ever been etter loved by her inferiors than by her equals; aperiors perhaps she has none. To the latter, he is not a little disposed to be 'lofty and sour,' hile to the former she is very generally 'sweet summer.'"

"So has she been to me," exclaimed Claude cautiously; "but I fancy that I can foresee aprice. Something like

The uncertain glory of an April day That now shows all the brightness of the sun, And by and bye a cloud takes all away."

"And imparts a chill all the more piercing for ne genial warmth that precedes it," added the ranger, regarding with a kindly interest the inenuous, inquiring countenance of Claude. "You tust be on your guard.

Stand you up Shielded, and helmed, and weaponed, with the truth,

d then you may defy the caprices of lords and dies. But though I would gladly relieve your res, I will not tell you that I think Lady Llararmon incapable of caprice; and yet that word oes not describe her character at all adequately, ither. The fact is she evidently grows weary f people, whom in the commencement of their equaintance she most distinguishes with favour. he seems to suffer terrifically from the inroads f the fiend ennui; unable to repel him, she calls foreign aid, and after a short respite, appears

never to find it effectual. How this restlessness can prevail in her as much, and even more than in other women, I am at a loss to discover-Superior as she is, in natural endowments and in the gifts of fortune, to all around her, why does she not repose on her superiority? Being disposed to philosophize in my own way, I take an interest in such a scrutiny. There is more individuality in people than is commonly discerned. We hear sages say that there are no two leaves growing on the same tree that are precisely similar, and we know that of all the faces we see, there are very rarely two so to make it possible for us to comalike as found the one with the other; and why do we suppose that there is less variety in the mind 2 'Chaque caractère est presque un monde nouvea pour qui sait observer avec finesse,' as Madame de Staël says. To be sure, people's convention manners and forms throw great difficulties in our way. Like all artificial contrivances, a great sameness reigns in them; and it is scarcely possible to detect under the assumed garb, all the native deformities or beauties of the wearer."

Here the stranger's remarks were interrupted by the approach of Miss Dormer, who putting her hand on his shoulder, bent down to whisper in his ear; and from this action Claude readily divined that the acquaintance, from whose conversation he had derived so much amusement could be no other than Mr. Dormer. This disy had the effect of making him doubly ied by the attention he had received from and disposed to listen with greater deference s remarks. In a few moments, Theodore approached them, and exclaimed with plea-

th! I see that you have commenced an intance with my friend. I have then only sent him to your daughter, that to-morrow ay none of us be strangers to him."

ter this introduction Miss Dormer seated f beside her father, saying that she was too ed to join the dance again at present, and ned to share the lively conversation which Dormer resumed, and to impart to it a tenreater charm than it had before possessed.

## CHAPTER XXV.

In core
Chi legger puommi? O nol sapess'io, come
Altri nol sa! così ingannar potessi,
Così sfuggir me stessa, come altrui!
Misera me! sollievo a me non resta
Altro che il pianto.

ALFIERI.

THE ball had come to a close, and the guests had departed, when Venetia suddenly approached Lady Llarnarmon with an earnest air, and taking her hand, which she yielded reluctantly, exclaimed:

"Dearest Lady Llarnarmon, I assure you that you look very ill. You have turned so pale several times this evening; you must not stay here any longer. The heat of the room perhaps has affected you."

Lady Llarnarmon drew away her hand, and replied in a tone that seemed designed to check Venetia's importunity:

"My dear child, your uneasiness is quite uncalled for. I believe that I am a little tired, but certainly not at all ill. I shall undoubtedly retire to rest, but I must take you with me, for I think it must be quite as necessary for you as for me." ing, and unbending a little in her manner, eached the end of her speech, she drew rmer's arm within hers, and affectionately her son, bowed to Claude with an air emed to him so indicative of haughtiness, to disconcert him. Mr. Dormer shook with much friendliness as they parted, dore who accompanied him to his chamered there as if he had something that he rous, and yet hesitated to communicate. however, could have only a momentary between him and Claude, and he ex-

- l, Claude, now that you have seen my nd spoken to her, and heard her speak, all you think of her. Is she what you ?"
- e knew not why, but he felt reluctant to this subject, and yet he ardently desired what were the feelings of his friend, to ight they had risen, if they were sancf they were returned, but he did not dare of these things.

may easily conceive," he replied, "that wholly unaccustomed to scenes of brilich as this has been, the effect is really ng; and certainly Miss Dormer's beauty he least dazzling part of what I have

Claude, she does not dazzle. There is ma-like serenity on her brow; a heaven-

liness in her countenance. One becomes accustomed to that which is dazzling, but her beauty grows every day in one's estimation. Let me ask you as Valentine asked his friend: 'Is she not a heavenly saint?' and you, you know, must reply: 'She is an earthly paragon.'"

"No," said Claude smiling, "I will not. I will reply in other words of the same poet, that

she

So perfect, and so peerless, is created Of every creature's best.

For certainly there were none to-night comparable to her. If you deem me as incapable of forming an estimate of her comparative charms, as Prospero declared Miranda was to judge of Ferdinand's excellence, I like her will affirm that at least I wish to see nothing more excellent. Are you satisfied?"

"Quite," answered Theodore; "you have said very well for a beginning. Say no more, or I shall fear a rival."

And they parted.

Let us follow Lady Llarnarmon, who as soon as she reached the door of her chamber, bid Venetia good night, with a momentary anger at the look of inquiry, fond as it was, that she read in her eyes. It received no answer, for without waiting for her to speak, if she were so inclined, she entered the room, and closed the door.

And now she was alone. Oh! how impossible

ers to conceive how much she had desired to! She was alone. She need no longer her writhing spirit with assumed calmness; ger force the burning tears to remain unscorching her eye-balls; she could clasp her ing temples with her icy hands, and snatch er brow the diamond circlet that seemed to t with its weight. Alone she could comwith her own heart; but she could not be

fastened the door, and cast herself upon a As yet she had not courage to ascertain at the suspicions that had arisen in her were, or were not without foundation. She led motionless as a statue; her mind seemed from the body; it was with the irretrievable narking how it might have been different, I at the power of temptations and dangers ere no longer present.

I then she inquired of herself if she could withsuch temptations, and defy such dangers for ure? Dismayed at this searching question, rang up, resolved to convert the agony of se even into the agony of certainty, rather smain any longer in doubt.

pared to encounter whatever awaited her, she ched a small cabinet, unlocked it, and drew casket, evidently intended to contain some-precious. Touching a spring, the lid flew up, isplayed the miniature of a young and beau-

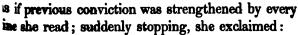


chance to see them dressed in the gay youth and hope, yet as we mark their of expression, we read but too legibly of fate, that

Grief is the shadow waiting on their

For if a lively sensibility impart a powing and a power of enjoying, which c never can know, so also does it heigh ceptibility of pain, and sharpen ever the quiver of misfortune. She gazed trait with eager scrutiny. There we smooth forehead, the same liquid gransparent skin and golden hair, only tiful. But more than all, there was t racter of melancholy thought, except thas if she anticipated sorrow, and he known it.

"He is her child," said Lady Llar low, decided voice; and laying down she sank upon a seat and buried her



"Yes, Claude is her child; his age, his circumstances, his very name corroborate the fact, even were it not established by that picture. How is it pessible that I did not divine all this even before saw him? Are the wicked blinded by Heaven?" the reflected a little, and then wildly exclaimed: 'Is this excruciating remorse but the forerunner of toments greater, and never ceasing? can I-seek Heaven's pardon? How can I ask it? Have I not, to gratify my proud ambition given back my redeemed soul to the spirit of evil? Do I repent?—What is it to repent? I would not repeat my crime for fruits threefold greater than those it won; but never will I reveal it now, when its punishment can no longer fall on my head alone; when the innocent must be smitten for the guilty; when confession would bring degradation on my child, and infamy on his parents. that last blow. Theodore could not survive. noble spirit would fail beneath it. To cease to reverence the mother he adores, and the father he regrets, would be his death-blow. No, never I add his destruction to my other sins."

As she uttered these words, she dropped the letter from her hands, and sat lost in thought. She shed no tears, and not another word passed her lips. Rising at length, she refolded the letter, replaced the portrait, locked the cabinet, and sought her bed. She slept the uneasy sleep of the guilty.

Nevertheless when she awoke, she remembered, and re-resolved on the line of conduct, which her reflections of the previous evening had suggested. She said inwardly, with a fierce and bitter scorn:

"As long as I am true to myself, this secret is as securely hidden in my breast, as if it had never been known to any other being on earth. Death has already mastered all others who could have betrayed it; perhaps he will not long spare me. There is silence in the grave, and in that silence is my child's safety. What have I then to fear?"

# CHAPTER XXVI.

La gratitude est d'abord timide comme l'amour; elle n'a point de paroles, point de voix, mais une fois rassurée, ruelle effusion de sentimens! Et comme ils coulent de ource! Même abondance de bienfaits, quand ils seront n son pouvoir.—Guizor.

Only for honour and for high regarde, Without respect of richesse or rewarde.

THE political influence possessed by Lord Sane, Lady Theodora's brother, we have already intioned as constituting the chief reason of Lord arnarmon's desire to unite her to his son. Though enty years had elapsed since that period, the wer of that able and experienced statesman was I great. Lady Llarnarmon knew that to him eodore looked for the means of Claude's adacement, and she resolved that his interest should employed only under her direction. This deternation set her mind at rest, for she trusted that would remove all cause for anxiety. She wrote her brother, and so far laid herself open to him, to beg him, if he listened to the requests which ' son would shortly proffer, to endeavour, in coming with them, to select an employment that

would place the individual, in whose favour he was addressed, at a distance from his young patron.

"For you know," she added, "how important at Theodore's age is the selection of friends, and associates; and that those of inferior station and low birth, are too commonly nothing more than servile flatterers, greedily on the watch to snatch at any reward for their venal adulation. If, therefore, you could provide for this humble protégé of my son's, by some foreign employment likely to afford him permanent emolument, you will have done all that will be really most advantageous to them both. When you have anything to propose, pray let your communications be made to me; otherwise the acceptance or refusal of whatever offer you shall make, may depend on the uncurbed ambition, or caprice of a very young man, very impatient to make his way in the world, and without any means of doing so, but such as we afford him. I will plead no excuse to you, dearest brother, for this infliction of my maternal anxiety upon you."

Having dispatched this letter she was for a time more tranquil, or at least able to preserve quite as much calmness as was habitual to her. Trusting to the security of her secret, she determined to endure for a time, without flinching, the probings of the

Sharp knife
Of silent, keen endurance,

inflicted on her by the presence of Claude Lermont. Lady Llarnarmon soon became sufficiently ac-

Prainted with the strength of her son's attachment to Claude, to see that any open manifestation \* dislike to his presence, would only estrange Theodore from herself, and excite his lively indignation. She dared not enter the lists against Claude, rithout having ascertained the extent of his power wer Theodore's mind. She began to fear that it ms unbounded; this fear was beyond the truth: it ras only as unbounded as was his confidence in his Though of a mild and yielding temper, Theodore was fortified by the strength of virtue, and none but those who manifested that uprightses of principle was the rule of their conduct s it was of his own, (-guarding him from all the erroneous deviations to which weakness is prone. which had so strikingly marked his father's career, and proved his bane;—) could have maintained any powerful influence over him, whatever might have been the force of his affection for them. His nother, enslaved and ensnared by passions, which she found invincible, had no conception of this thength, 'made perfect in weakness,' which comes at from above. She eagerly awaited some means fremoving Claude, by providing for him in a way parable to his patron, and such as he could ave no fair grounds for rejecting. In the mean me she would have been much rejoiced if she and have degraded Claude from the position he eld, and confounded him with the common herd dependents, whom she always treated with Pability, and even kindness; but in this she could



rendered such a design difficult of exect verence thyself,' was a precept deeply gr mind, and his language to Theodore co to awaken Lady Llarnarmon's admirati spect.

"Do not bring me forward," he s dependent on yourself, nor as a su other men's favours. Let me stand fi own ground. Let me be known, if y one of obscure birth, and little mean friends, but not without education; nor abilities to use its gifts; one, determin in honour, and in honesty, any sprun noblest blood in the kingdom; one, p your affection, not as a servile flattere trusty friend."

These noble sentiments would have standard that been possible, the attachment v dore expressed with so much delicacy a warmth, that Lermont felt almost pershe could accept any benefits from such a

compunction, and some misgiving. "God has given my son a great gift," (she said to herself,) "in granting him so noble a friend; and shall I rob him of that which it is little likely that life will ever again bestow?"

Claude's devotion touched her heart, but she could not bear that its reward should be the love of Theodore.

### CHAPTER XXVII.

Whereof comes this? Never afflict yourself to know the cause.

Shall I compare thee to a summer day?

Thou art more levely and more temperate.

SHAKSPEARE.

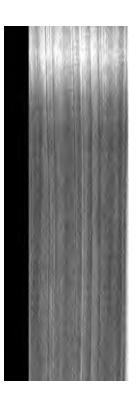
CLAUDE LERMONT could not long conceal from himself, that his present situation offered very little prospect of comfort or pleasure, save that of being always with Theodore. He saw that his friend was followed by the usual train of servite dependents, that flock around the great; and that they desired and hoped that he would, sooner or later, sink to their level. As they could not discover that he was elevated above it, by higher birth or any other gift of fortune, they treated the silent coldness with which he stood aloof, as the result of supercilious pride; and he became of course exposed to their aversion and malice.

That he was daily more and more an object of dislike to the mother of his friend, was also evident to him, though the cause remained completely a mystery. He supposed that she regarded Theodore's affection, and the influence with which it endowed him, with painful jealousy; and often would he say to himself:

it possible, that the very cause that abates resentment I might otherwise feel at this ul treatment, should increase the bitterness version? She adores her son, who loves tenderly in return. For his sake, I can at enmity with her; while on the contrary is to hate me for loving him, and still more; loved by him."

le also fancied, but he did not like to dwell e thought, that it displeased Lady Llarmuch to view the favour in which he ith both Mr. Dormer and his daughter. constantly with Theodore and with them, seemed to derive pleasure from his society, atedly expressed a warm desire to hear of e well-being.

Dormer was a man full of anecdote, and sed in the knowledge of the world. icularly fond of youthful companions, and o cheerful and too good-humoured to imrestraint on them by his presence, he was cceptable to them. When in Italy, his as the general rendezvous of all his comand he was so well established there, that l also select from all ranks, those of all whom he wished to include in the circle This kind of life had rencquaintance. constant succession of society absolutely to his amusement, and the acquisition of able companion, a thing not to be ne-



piring with ennui before it arrived.

His daughter added to the charn person, varied accomplishments, a mind; but above all, a peculiar refi and feeling. Theodore and Claude 1 and inclination to pursue the study and they found that a daily scrut daily more interesting. Her very excite lasting displeasure, and dese name than imperfections; whenev errors of conduct, every trifling followed by such sincere and livel that her penitence was almost as virtue. The warmest sympathy, th tating devotion were the ready gift ship. Candid and sincere even to i could scarcely assume deference, wh feel respect; while with those she reverenced, she was humble, lowly, With the proud and imp child. almost haughty: with the meek.

hose whom she was least disposed to seek as riends.

Though Venetia's lively spirits and engaging vivacity gave a charm to every society of which she formed a part; though in scenes of gay festivity she seemed born to shine to her own delight and that of others; yet it was not there that she believed her real happiness to exist, nor did she there fruitlessly seek it. She felt that there was 'a deeper and appropriate bliss,' that her spirit was framed to enjoy. And while, at her father's desire, she was his inseparable companion, and shared with him all from which he seemed to derive never failing amusement; yet her own feelings prompted her to seek a life of peaceful tranquillity, in which her pleasures should rather be derived from free commune with those she loved. from the culture of her mind, and from the exercise of her talents. She was therefore very happy, where her father was very dull; and had it not been for a fond yearning to rejoin her mother, could have wished these placid days to be prolonged throughout her existence.

Claude thought that he perceived a great anxiety in Lady Llarnarmon to foster the feelings of interest that Theodore manifested with regard to his young cousin; he made this observation in silence, nor did he communicate it, or allude to it to his friend. He was superior to any petty feeling of spite that might lead him to attempt to defeat any liscovered scheme of Lady Llarnarmon's, without VOL. III.

some high and worthy motive for entering the lists as her opponent. He was resolved that his conduct towards her should be strictly defensive.

No levelled malice Infects one action in the course he holds. He flies an eagle flight; bold and forth on Leaving no track behind.

#### CHAPTER XXVIII.

I know thy forms are studied arts,

Thy subtle ways but narrow straits;

Thy courtesy but sudden starts;

And what thou callest thy gifts are baits.

But on thine eyes there is a blinding charm
Which Satan more and more doth lay
Upon the heart that will not pray.
THOUGHTS IN PAST YEARS.

How very strange," said Mr. Dormer, walkinto the breakfast-room one morning, "that ip Ainslie should be living in this county, not ity miles distant from hence, and I never wit!"

Not so very strange," replied Lady Llarnari; "for during many years I doubt whether he been five miles beyond his park gates. He is a recluse, abjures society, becomes more t every day, and finds 'his best friends, his is,' I suppose, for he certainly seeks no other." Yet that is not quite the case either," answered Dormer, "for he still condescends to seek narmon and me. Here is an invitation ining both, proposing that we should spend some with him, and saying that had he sooner

learned my presence in the country, he would not have been the last to welcome me."

"This is very like him, and does not disprove what I said," returned Lady Llarnarmon. "He is a man who lives completely in the past. You are the friend of former days; and for the same reason his heart warms towards Theodore. When he sees him, it is of his father that he thinks. During my absence, every year he desired him to pay him a visit, when he overpowered him with kindness, and expended on him the whole stock of affection that lay accumulating in the interval."

Lady Llarnarmon appeared anxious and uneasy until this invitation was accepted; but as her manner was often excited, and her injunctions arbitrary, when trifles were brought before her, her present eagerness passed without remark.

The next morning Mr. Dormer and Lord Larnarmon started after breakfast for Ainslie Park; Venetia strolled into the garden, and Claude presently joined her. As he approached, Venetia exclaimed:

"I am looking forward to receiving a letter this morning from my mother. Until that point be decided, I can do nothing. I see the boy and his pony advancing there among the trees, quite at the end of the avenue. I must go to meet him, and thus obtain my letter three minutes sooner than I should do otherwise."

So saying, she left the garden, and hastened forward. Claude called to the boy to quicken his pace, and he cantered up to them.

"Well," exclaimed Venetia, "have you any leters for me? Any for Miss Dormer?"

" No. Miss, none."

"Are you sure? Let me see all that you ave."

He pulled them out of his bag, and Venetia astily turned them over. There was one for herather, but it was an English one; and one for Lord larnarmon, but none for her. She gave them back the boy, and turned disconsolately towards the ouse without speaking. Claude followed her in illence; he felt for her disappointment, and wished say something that might divert her thoughts om it; but was almost averse to be the first to peak. At length he said:

"Are you impatient to return to Italy, Miss ormer?"

"I am impatient to be with my mother," she plied, turning quickly towards him; and he as a with the eyes were filled with tears, and the cheek was wet with them. When she claude's look of tender concern, she hastily shed them away, and exclaimed:

"How foolish and impatient you must think

"No indeed!" said Claude sadly; "I was only ying you, as those of more than common senbility need be pitied."

Venetia coloured, and replied in a lively tone, as ashamed of her ill-subdued emotion:

"I cannot, you know, be expected to be one of

those who 'no whit e'er change their constant mood.' I am Ocean's child; and, like my mother, I am 'proud, fantastical, inconstant,' 'full of tears and full of smiles.'"

"What do you mean?" asked Claude.

Why that I was born at Venice," replied Venetia laughing; and glad to turn to another subject she continued: "Dear, dear Venice! Always shall you be to me my native country. I rejoice in bearing your name, for it is pleasant for me to hear it. Your crumbling palaces, your gorgeous halls, your matchless pictures; your stately churches, and jewelled shrines; your mighty names, your profound mysteries; your irresistible sway; your conquests over the most powerful; your thraldom that could not be escaped, all appeal most forcibly to the imagination! Oh! at Venice it is still possible to be romantic!

"Possible!" repeated Claude.

"Yes," returned Venetia, "I would that my words could make you conceive what an exquisite consciousness you experience when there of having escaped from our 'work-a-day world,' to the

Revel of the world, the masque of Italy.

Oh! whenever I sigh for a delicious hour of reverie, I long to be in one of her noiseless gondolas, floating within hearing of the music of St. Mark's, with some companion content, like myself, to gaze speechlessly up at the stars in heaven, and then down into the water at the countless bright lights reflected in its bosom."

By this time they had reached the house; and ty Llarnarmon, throwing open the window of library, called to Venetia, and said:

"I am sorry, my love, to condemn you to solile, but I must beg Mr. Lermont to come hither I have something to say to him that should not delayed."

For some days Lady Llarnarmon had been most cious towards Claude. Up to that time her our had been very precarious. Sometimes she i assumed a grand and chilling deportment, ant to teach him that he was in no way to inge on her dignity, and that the condescension herself and her son could not entitle him to familiarity of an equal.

No honour was omitted, No outward courtesy; but in the place Of condescending, confidential kindness, Familiar and endearing,

h as he met with from others.

There was given him Only these honours, and this solemn courtesy.

other times she was betrayed, by the remorseful licts of angry passions, into the display of an ability as undignified with regard to herself, as as unjust to Claude. She was, when thus disted by

The passionate strife that pride and misery know t guilty of a petty malice that showed itself a bitter, taunting, ungenerous spirit, a readito misinterpret every sentiment he ex-

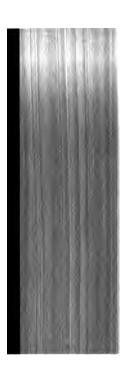


disconcerted, and others were almost latterly these artifices had ceased. curred frequently and tenderly to th titude which she owed him: she hac posed to adopt all her son's feeling with regard to him, and had bestowe tinguishing marks of kindness and c suddenness of this change, which, in was perceptible only to himself, w plicable to Claude; but he found it to be much disposed to inquire nari reality of it. Though perhaps he been glad if Lady Llarnarmon's munication could have been deferred hesitate to obey her summons, an moment entered the room where sl at a writing-table, several letters, op opened, finished and unfinished, her. On her cheek there was a l colour, and Claude fancied that has

and the date it bore not less than a week back. This remark excited a passing feeling of surprise; for it seemed strange that there could be any reason for consulting him now about a letter that must have arrived so much before Theodore's departure; but Lady Llarnarmon cut short his reflections by beginning:

"I hope, Mr. Lermont, that I need not remind you of the sincere regard that is entertained for you in this family, nor assure you how delightful it would be to any member of it to forward your interests, and make some suitable, I do not say adequate return, for none can be such, for the benefit you once conferred on it—a benefit, Mr. Lermont, which, for many years before I knew you, caused me to join your name in my daily prayers to that of my child, when imploring Heaven's blessing on all that was dear to me—a benefit that awoke the most lively transports of gratitude that ever glowed in this heart."

She stopped suddenly, overpowered with emotion. This true description of the past feelings with which she had been accustomed to regard Claude, contrasted with the fierce animosity which now filled her, caused her 'a piercing throe' of anguish, and the words she spoke provoked so stern a reply from her conscience, that she was almost impelled to cast herself on her knees before Heaven, and before Him she had injured, to confess her guilt and supplicate for pardon. But the spirit of evil Prevailed. How easily can he smother every faint



might have believed that the purposition to effect would be really phappiness and satisfaction to Claude. joyfully accede to her proposition, she could fall at his feet to thank him. that trembled on her lips were: 'Let more thank that the tears that filled her eyes were tear Veiling her agitation, she continued:

"I am now in hopes, Mr. Lermo time is come when we can effect what desire. You know that all my son's vested in the influence of my brother, vile; but that, great as it is esteemed, fear, far less facility in serving his frien are willing to imagine. The applicati which I made to him, was conveyed it showed him how much we had the ob and induced him thus early to gratify In this letter he empowers me to offer tion in India, of which the salary, ever

"You will easily believe that this letter demands a speedy reply. If you will at once take the subject into consideration, we can avail ourselves of this day's post."

"Madam," replied Claude, "the interest you declare, and the services you are desirous to render me, demand an expression of the warmest gratitude in return. But the decision called for is one that will so materially affect the whole tenour of my future life, that I cannot reasonably make it, without first giving the subject deep consideration. Allow me, therefore, to quit you now in silence; but do not, on that account, believe me the less touched by the extreme kindness with which you treat me."

He stopped short; doubts, ill-defined, rose up before him as he spoke: he turned away, and left her

#### CHAPTER XXIX.

If thou hast believed that I shall act
A part in this thy play—
Thou hast miscalculated on me grievously.
My way must be straight on—
All must remain pure between him and me.
COLERIDGE'S WALLENSTRIM.

DESIROUS to be alone and undisturbed. in order that he might examine and arrange the many thoughts that had crowded into his mind, while listening to Lady Llarnarmon's specious words, Claude entered the park, and turned into a secluded path. It appeared to him that some mystery certainly existed with regard to Lord Sanvile's letter. If it had arrived according to the post-mark he had seen on it, why had it not been communicated to Theodore? He was further disposed to think that Lady Llarnarmon must have received it before her son's departure, because he did not remember, when Venetia sought her letter, to have seen any for her. Had she anticipated from Theodore a prompt rejection of an offer which, in fact, contained a decree of banishment? Or, was it possible that Lord Llarnarmon had been already informed of this letter, and, approving of the proposition, though still unwilling to make it, had permitted the task to devolve upon his mother, anxious that Claude should be left to weigh for himself the advantages and disadvantages of it, uninfluenced by any consideration of his friend's wishes? Was it possible that Theodore had decreed that, in spite of the pangs it must cost them both to separate, it was an offer that ought to be accepted? The rest of his conduct was not irreconcileable with the supposition that he entertained such an opinion.

Claude remembered the gentleness and timidity of his temper, and the sensitiveness with which he shrank from giving pain, or even from encountering the sight of it, unless imperatively called upon to do so. But then there was a want of candour in such a course of behaviour, that speedily led him to determine that Theodore could not have acted thus: that it was incompatible with the frank affection and unruffled calmness of his manner in departing; and he rejected an idea which he saw did not deserve farther consideration. Did Lady Llarnarmon then, in spite of all the studied kindness of her persuasive words, cherish such a fixed aversion towards him, as to rejoice in the prospect of placing him in a situation that would entirely remove him from her presence, and cut him off from all communication with her son? If this last supposition were true, it proved what he could not but suspect; that her dislike to him, undeserved as he felt it to be, was

No every day misunderstanding, No transient pique, no cloud that passes over, but rather,

Something most luckless and unhealable.

Could he then, in such a case, persist in remaining at Llarnarmon Castle? Could he in fact, remain there at all with honour to himself. if he rejected this offer of secured independence without the full support of the declared wishes of his friend? He was backward to urge that Theodore would be averse to his acceptance of this office, when he was not there to affirm this for himself. Nevertheless, he was really convinced that his friend would, without hesitation, expect him to make any merely pecuniary sacrifice, rather than consent to go away, to pass perhaps all the rest of his life remote from him. But if he were induced by such feelings to decline this proposal, he could not endure that Lord Llarnarmon should therefore consider himself under an obligation to repair the injury to his interests by insuring him the means of gain in some other quarter. He remembered the conversation he had held with Mr. Dormer on the subject of a state of dependency; and he concluded that after making this refusal, it would be no longer possible for him to remain at Llarnarmon Castle, awaiting what his patron could do for him; but that he must look to himself to be the maker of his own fortune, though, in order to do so, he might find it necessary to estrange himself as much from his friend's society, as in the case of acceptance of the offer now made to him.

While meditating on all these conflicting difficulties, he turned down a shady glade, and a little in advance of him, perceived Venetia. The rustling of his footsteps among the leaves made her turn, just as he was inwardly debating whether he should join her, or continue his meditations without interruption. She greeted him with an air of pleasure, and said with a smile:

"Well, the weighty conference is over and concluded to the satisfaction of both, I hope?"

She closed a book which she held in her hand as she spoke, when Claude replied in a tone of sadness:

"Do not lay aside your book, Miss Dormer, for you will find my society a very inadequate substitute for any amusement it may have afforded you."

Some playful reply was on the smiling lips of Venetia; but regarding his countenance, she read on it so much uneasiness, that immediately assuming a serious air, she asked:

"Tell me, Mr. Lermont, has Lady Llarnarmon communicated any painful intelligence to you? Has any fresh annoyance arisen?"

Touched by her tone of interest, and still more by the words she used, which indicated that all the past petty wounds and grievances which he had suffered, had not passed without her observation, Claude could not control the inclination he felt to tell her all that had occurred, and forgetting all further reserve, he related to her Lady Llarnarmon's communication. When he came to the close of his narrative, they both walked on in silence. At length Claude exclaimed:

- "Would to Heaven that Lord Llarnarmon were here! He would, I am persuaded, give an unqualified refusal to this offer; yet if I reject it unauthorized by him, will it not be made to appear that I cast myself back in dependence on him, when means of honourable provision are afforded me?"
- "Oh! Mr. Lermont," cried Venetia hastily, "act for yourself, and do not pause to consider what sinister constructions may be put on your conduct. Theodore,—my father,—all who know you, will judge you rightly." She stopped, blushing at her own impetuosity, and Claude replied:
- "I know that I am not justified in acceding to such a proposal in the absence of my friend, and I will not be induced to do so. If Lady Llarnarmon think it indispensable to send an answer to-night, it must be a refusal. If she will allow me time to consult her son, the decision shall rest in his hands. I will leave it wholly to him."
- "Nay," said Venetia, "that is scarcely reasonable; though, thinking of my cousin as I do, I know you may so leave it with safety. But if Theodore ought, and undoubtedly he ought, to be consulted about this letter of his uncle's, why cannot it be sent to him immediately? Really I think that the best plan would be for you to take the letter and ride up to Ainslie Park, and see papa and Theodore. Their advice will be far more satisfactory to you than that of Lady Llarnarmon or—or any that you can have here."

Claude listened to what she said, and felt that she

spoke rightly. He determined to adopt her suggestion, and not without emotion, thanked her for it. As they returned to the Castle, Venetia continued: "I can easily perceive that Lady Llarnarmon is anxious to spare her son the painful task of decision. She perhaps thinks that it would be very unwise in you to allow your feelings to throw any impediment in the way of your interest. But on this point you must judge, as well as feel for yourself."

To those inexplicable circumstances which appeared to cast a suspicion on Lady Llarnarmon, Claude did not allude.

Claude immediately returned to Lady Llarnarmon, and communicated his determination. She listened with silent composure, but grew very pale. He had quitted her without any disclosure of his sentiments or intentions, and she had hoped that pride, and a certain natural yearning for independence, might check any inclination to reject her proposal; she had even thought that perhaps his love for her son would not withstand so much temptation, that perhaps it was not so strong as he wished it to be believed, or as he believed it himself to be; in short, she had deemed the game worth playing; but now she saw that the stake was lost. She had not, however, neglected to contemplate this possibility, and during his absence had resolved, in case of meeting with the rejection she dreaded, that she would still transmit her proposal to Mr. Dormer and her son, trusting that the worldly wisdom of the former would afford her the support she needed; and if it could

not dispose the young men to acquiesce in the same views, would at least dispel any indignation excited in their minds by her conduct, and make their own appear irrational and romantic. When Lady Llarnarmon spoke in reply, it was with studied composure.

"Mr. Lermont," she said, "I have done what I considered a duty in communicating to you immediately the contents of Lord Sanvile's letter. I thought that you would have shared my desire that my son might be spared the pain of making this decision for you, by making it for yourself; then even if you had rejected the offered gift, it might have remained unknown to him. Had you, on calm reflection, decided to accept it, Theodore has too sincere a regard for you to have offered any opposition. You have chosen a different line of conduct. If you will send to me when ready to start, I will give you the letter for Lord Llarnarmon."

The emphasis with which she spoke, towards the close of her speech, betrayed the greatness of her displeasure; but Claude did not perceive any means of appeasing it, nor indeed did he seek any; he calmly listened to all she said, and left her.

So Claude departed, and Lady Llarnarmon and Venetia were left to each other, or rather to themselves. The thoughts of each went with him, and the evening was passed in comfortless, unsociable silence, for each had feelings they could not confess, and each was beginning to mistrust and suspect the other.

spoke rightly. He determined to adopt her suggestion, and not without emotion, thanked her for it. Is they returned to the Castle, Venetia continued: I can easily perceive that Lady Llarnarmon is axious to spare her son the painful task of desion. She perhaps thinks that it would be very wise in you to allow your feelings to throw any pediment in the way of your interest. But on this int you must judge, as well as feel for yourself." To those inexplicable circumstances which apured to cast a suspicion on Lady Llarnarmon, ande did not allude.

Claude immediately returned to Lady Llarnarn. and communicated his determination. She ened with silent composure, but grew very pale. had quitted her without any disclosure of his timents or intentions, and she had hoped that ie. and a certain natural yearning for indedence, might check any inclination to reject proposal; she had even thought that pers his love for her son would not withstand nuch temptation, that perhaps it was not so ng as he wished it to be believed, or as he ved it himself to be; in short, she had deemed rame worth playing; but now she saw that the was lost. She had not, however, neglected ntemplate this possibility, and during his abhad resolved, in case of meeting with the ion she dreaded, that she would still transmit roposal to Mr. Dormer and her son, trusting the worldly wisdom of the former would her the support she needed; and if it could Theodore, I am sure, will spare me a few minutes. Let me come with you."

And taking Theodore's arm, he conducted him out of the room. Theodore hastily led the way to his apartment; when there, he closed the door, and excl. med:

"Now, dearest Claude, tell me what has happened to yo 1?"

Still without speaking, Claude placed Lord Sanvile's letter in his hand, then with an effort, he said in a husky voice:

"I am come to ask you for an answer to this letter."

Scarcely had Theodore's eye glanced over the paper, than he raised it with a reproachful glance, and exclaimed:

"What, Claude, would you leave me?"

The brothers' hearts responded to each other; they fell into each others' arms, and shed tears. Lady Llarnarmon, you are conquered! It lies not in your power to break these bands of nature, nor to separate these united souls!

Mr. Dormer meantime, having lost his alarm, began to feel some curiosity, and indeed interest, as to the cause of Claude's appearance there. He could not, of course, break in upon the conference of the two friends, but when it had outlasted an hour, he began to think that he might transmit to them some of Mr. Ainslie's kindly welcoming messages to the unlooked-for guest.

Accordingly, he went to the door of Theodore's

chamber, and knocking, was immediately admitted. Claude who now looked himself again, and had recovered all his manly self-possession and usual tone of frank decision, declared that he had no intention of deranging the domestic affairs of Mr. Ainslie, that he was about to quit the house at once, and should probably be at the Castle before the arrival of their breakfast-hour. Dormer assured him that this must not be, as Mr. Ainslie would be really hurt and offended by such a proceeding; and as Theodore proved to him that nothing could be more useless than this precipitate departure, he agreed to pass the night and the following morning where he was, and to reach Llarnarmon in time for the post. Claude, anxious to avoid an appearance of mystery and want of confidence towards one who had showed him so much kindness, intimated to Theodore his desire to inform Mr. Dormer of the cause of his visit.

- "I will show him my mother's letter," replied Theodore without hesitation.
  - "Lord Sanvile's, you mean," said Claude.
- "No, no, it is from my mother," repeated Theodore, putting it into Mr. Dormer's hand.

This circumstance caused some surprise in Claude's mind, and afforded fresh matter for reflection. Mr. Dormer, after perusing the letter, said to Claude, kindly:

"My young friend, I will not give you any opinion on this point to-night; to-morrow we will



Theodore and Claude did not former's advice in either respect. The that of a moment; but it was unc instead of going to rest, they spent in conversing with each other.

It was not surprising that Mr. De when given, should be found not coincide with that of the two young had been led by an unlooked-for pecuniary circumstances, and by the health of his wife, to submit to ba his native country, and was thus the natural position, and left without tions of his own. Possessing both and a kind heart, he readily interes the affairs of others, and would u with the same alacrity which he w ployed in his own. He had a patronage, which his position en a measure to indulge; he, theref without some protégé, who, under might have to obtain a contain

#### CONTRITION.

erience. He had contracted a strong parfor Claude, and had often meditated proto him to return with him to Italy, thinking e should not find it difficult to advance him, in the literary or diplomatic line; but when Sanvile's offer was laid before him, he saw the manifest advantage which it possessed ny thing he had to propose, and he was r to keep back this opinion from him. The liate rejection which it met with from Theoand Claude, appeared to him absurdly ro-, which he told them without hesitation: ving done so as a duty, he was by no means sed to see them adhere to their decision; hile his worldly wisdom taught him to conthem for folly and rashness, his native geneof heart made him regard their devotion secret satisfaction. Claude was therefore ted to depart, commissioned to transmit a d refusal to Lord Sanvile, and bearing a letm Theodore to his mother.

Claude rode homeward with less eager haste and impelled him thence, his thoughts natudwelt, with rejoicing, on his friend thus I true to every test, and not to be surpassed erosity, tenderness, or delicacy. His heart wed with the emotions of gratitude, and he I for an occasion to manifest some part of the felt. As he was occupied in vainly regretis want of power ever to benefit his friend, by unceasing, watchful love, the thought of



siasm with which he regarded the friend; how capable of truly estima the value of the 'gauds and toys, the world can purchase, weighed against of one true heart. He knew th choice, and his choice, would also h As he continued these meditations. sigh; he was thinking that of all th fortune had lavished on Theodore. He had from his first introdu narmon Castle compelled himself to as the future wife of his friend; and idea had never yet received confirms express declarations on the part of T circumstances had strengthened it. in any point of view, doubt the al never evincing, by word or dee passion which had sprung up in h from the first hour he had behel passion so intense in its nature, and

miser watched beside his gold. He would not refuse to the fire within him the fuel that fed it, and made it burn more brightly; and would have aided in its extinction as reluctantly as he would have signed the death warrant of a friend.

"Let the day be without light for me," he said, "rather than my heart without love; but as the orb of day shines on, insensible of the happiness it diffuses, so let Venetia remain in ignorance that I live on her looks, and on every word that falls from her lips. If I am but impowered to minister in any way to the happiness of the two beings whom I love best on earth; I would not exchange my present lot for the most fortunate that ever favoured mortal!"

It is scarcely credible how little Claude deceived himself, in supposing that he was capable of persisting in the course he had marked out; how much he possessed the power of veiling and concealing emotions which he designed to subject, but never to annihilate. To-day, however, as he continued to reflect upon this subject, the remembrance of the lively interest that Venetia had shown in his welfare, though he cherished it gratefully, also warned him that, however desirous he might allowably be to enjoy her friendship, however anxious to perform every trifling service for her that lay in his power; yet it was neither true nor honourable to Theodore or to her, so to act towards her, as to win her to love his society, to sympathize in his feelings, to seek his opinions, and to interest

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that lively sensibility, which he saw predominant in her character, in his future fate and fortunes-When he asked himself whether she at present returned Theodore's affection, though he would fai have avoided replying to the searching questionhis heart heard an inward voice whispering that it was not so, and that his presence, insignificant as he was, might, if he so willed, prove a bar to the admission of love for another into her heart-Shocked at this answer to which he could not turn a deaf ear, (for he had never been accustomed to silence the voice of conscience) he resolved that he would, for the future, carefully guard against this secret treachery to Theodore, to Mr. Dormer, and also to Venetia; and he decided that the safest, best, and most honest measure that he could adopt, would be during the rest of the visit of Mr. Dormer and his daughter at the Castle, to return to Mr. Mordaunt, and to remain there for a time which would probably be but short. He knew that his plan would meet with opposition, both from Theodore and from Mr. Dormer, which it would be difficult to withstand, as he could not possibly confide to either the secret cause of his determination; and it would be the first time he had ever withheld a motive from Theodore. When he also reflected that thus to act, was to bid adieu to Venetia, probably for ever, and with an appearance of indifference, his heart sickened, but he did not relax in his purpose.

On reaching the Castle, knowing that he had

effected what was unpleasing to Lady Llarnarmon, he felt a generous repugnance to act in any way that might appear to indicate a consciousness of triumph. Claude, therefore, as soon as he arrived, sent her son's letter to her, and then, in order to avoid encountering Venetia, hastily retired to his own apartment to await her summons. This he received in about an hour, and he proceeded to the library in compliance with it. As he went he met Venetia, who blushing deeply as she gave him her hand, said in a hesitating voice:

"I do not ask the result of your visit because I know what it must be."

"You are right, Miss Dormer," replied Claude; "in believing that no one who trusts in your cousin can be disappointed."

Lady Llarnarmon's reception of him was different from any thing he had anticipated. She said when he entered:

"I only sent for you, Mr. Lermont, in order to say that, in compliance with my son's wishes expressed in his letter, I have written at once to my brother, Lord Sanvile, and informed him of your decided rejection of his offer. I hope that this may not be his only means of serving you, and that his next attempt may meet your wishes better."

She then changed the subject of conversation, and continued it for a short time without betraying any symptoms of disappointment or resentment. The only sentiment that manifested itself at all

offensively to Claude was an apparent pity, real or assumed, and not unmixed with suspicion; as if Lady Llarnarmon could not help betraying to him that she had learnt to look upon him as unwise and weak, or else as veiling more profound designs beneath this appearance. This distrust was just sufficiently indicated to create an uneasy, indefinite sensation of embarrassment in Claude while in her presence, and as he sedulously avoided Venetia society, he was very glad when the two days were passed, which intervened between his visit and Ainslie Park, and the return of Theodore and Management.

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# CHAPTER XXXI.

Non so ben dove si pieghi L'irresoluto mio dubbioso core.

. . . . Gode
Del dolce suon della verace lode.
TASSO.

the morning that Theodore and Mr. Dormer nslie Park, they were overtaken by a heavy and were thoroughly drenched to the skin beey reached the Castle. When they arrived, larnarmon was out in the grounds; neither nor Venetia appeared, and the two gentlearted at once, and retired to their respective ents, to change their streaming garments; neodore in order to do so had to pass h a room, at one end of which he perceived enetia was seated drawing. She appeared orbed in her occupation as not to be aware approach until he spoke. Then she welhim affectionately, and said with a bright "It is for you that I am turning over s heap of sketches, in order to find for at head in the Transfiguration which you ou so much admired. Imperfectly as my g expresses the beauty of the original, still

I think that you may like to see it." Poor Theodore could not read that this flattering kindness originated in a feeling of gratitude for his conduct towards Claude, and he regarded the drawing which she now produced with interest, expressing unbounded admiration of it.

"Does it really please you?" said Venetia, blushing as she spoke. "Perhaps then you would like to have it. I am sure that if it would give you the slightest pleasure to call it yours, it would give me the greatest to make it so. I can do another for myself next year, and I shall like so much to leave this with you."

Theodore was visibly touched by this kind declaration, and would probably have demonstrated the strength of his gratitude by some suitable reply, when their conversation was cut short by the entrance of Lady Llarnarmon and Claude, who approached them, and after their first inquiries of Theodore were made, turned with interest to the examination of the beautiful productions of Venetia's pencil. While they were admiring and commenting upon them, Lady Llarnarmon's attention was suddenly distracted by observing that her son looked very pale and fatigued; she came round to him, and with an air of solicitude so tender as to make her appear almost amiable in the eyes of Claude, laid her hand on Theodore's shoulder; when starting back in dismay, she exclaimed:

"Good God! is it possible, my dearest Theo-

that you have remained here all this time our wet clothes? No wonder that your looks ified me. Begone this moment; you have htened me cruelly. Go, I beg; I insist. And, Venetia," she added reproachfully, "how d you detain him here to look at these things the might see at any time?" and she any pushed aside the drawings. Some of them to the ground, and Venetia was very glad to p to collect them, in order to conceal the blush ainful embarrassment, produced by Lady Llarnon's reproach. In doing so she encountered to anxious scrutiny from the eyes of Claude, the made here sink yet more abashed to the ind.

laude approached his friend, and passing his through his, said tenderly: "This is a silly of imprudence; though I hope that Lady narmon's alarm will prove quite gratuitous; but e with me now, and let us try to escape any greeable consequences." So saying, they left room together, the mind of each perhaps more pied by the desire to read the secret cause of etia's blushes, than by the more important and ble anticipation of cold and fever, that haunted v Llarnarmon's imagination.

Ieantime poor Venetia, more annoyed than ned reasonable even to herself, flew to her nber and throwing herself upon a seat, burst tears. After a few minutes, she began to herself why she was weeping, and finding that

she could not give any very clear or satisfactory answer, proceeded to determine that she was very angry with Lady Llarnarmon, who had treated her with little consideration or kindness, in casting on her, in the presence of her cousin and his friend, the imputation of being regardless of others for the sake of gratifying a love of display; --- or did Claude think that she felt an interest in Theodore's approbation that made her thus anxious to seek it? Surely the look she had met seemed to say so; and again she wept with vexation at this idea, which was the predominating one in her mind. She thought: "How shall I remove an impression that is so false, and which will no doubt be strengthened when Theodore tells him that I have given him the drawing he admired. Was I not very silly to do so? Will not Theodore himself fall into the same delusion? Will not Mr. Lermont. who thinks his friend so perfect, impart to him the discovery which he thinks he has made? And Theodore believes every word that he hears from him!" Venetia could not bear the result of her meditations, and began vainly to plan a thousand modes of undeceiving both her cousin and Claude, as immediately as possible. At length in the midst of her resolutions she remembered that it was absolutely necessary for her to prepare to join the party at the dinner table, when just as she had completed a hurried and careless toilet, Lady Llarnarmon entered the room with a look of care:

<sup>&</sup>quot;Do you know, Venetia," she said, "that Theo-

re really is too unwell to dine with us? Lermont s just told me that he has persuaded him to go bed. I am going to see him, and I think I shall id off to-night for Dr. Cowley. I am not at all y."

Venetia, blushing again at the remembrance the train of thoughts that Lady Llarnarmon's rance had cut short, replied: "I hope that re is no real cause for anxiety. I dare say a hours' rest will restore him; but still if it uld make you happier to summon Dr. Cowley, tope you will do so."

Venetia's anger disappeared when she saw the ces of sorrow on Lady Llarnarmon's face. She o was forgiven, for Lady Llarnarmon, after zing on her for a moment, tenderly kissed her. It Venetia's satisfaction at this reconciliation was destroyed by the parting glance at her mirror, lich showed her that her eyes were still red with zent tears, and she immediately attributed Lady arnarmon's unsolicited kiss to the compassion cited by them, and dreaded more than ever meet Claude with a countenance that could t fail to confirm any preconceived erroneous tions. This idea redoubled the confusion with lich she entered the room where he and her her were awaiting their arrival.

Their meal was rather a melancholy one. Lady arnarmon was sad and silent; Mr. Dormer tired d sleepy, and Claude absorbed in thought. No oner was the dinner removed than he rose and



know who this young Lermont become such an inseparable compasson? I don't ask this question suspecause I am really interested, and pleased by this young man. His is countenance are remarkably in his there is something in the way in which fests his devotion to your son, that a that his affection is disinterested."

"I have never known any thing of Lady Llarnarmon, "further than a taken from the family of a wealthy y resided near Mr. Mordaunt. His fi ance with Theodore, you know, origing gallantly saving him from danger; if if he be devoted, you must allow the quite equally disposed to be grateful."

"Yes, indeed! Their friendship mantic. I must say that Claude ap

; and they rose and left the room. Mr. er soon retired, and Lady Llarnarmon sat in t silence and abstraction. At last she rose, old Venetia that she should go to her son, ot return any more that evening. She eml her with affection as she left her. once more alone, could not banish from her unpleasant recollections of the past day, and a z of deep regret at the circumstance of her g been so unwittingly the cause of the delay appeared to occasion Theodore's illness. She d for the next morning to come and bring to her fears. Her lively imagination pictured possible scene of distress; and she sat and at her own fancies. But her reverie was dis-1 by the opening of the door, and the sudden rance of Claude; he paused and hesitated, ermined whether to advance or to retreat; he I fain speak to her some words of consolation, e feared to intrude. Venetia, beyond measure bed at being found by him in such a state of ent grief, could not endure the thought that ould leave her without some explanation. As ould not immediately command her voice, she ned him to her. He entered, and approacher, addressed her with a mixture of tendernd embarrassment in his manner:

My dear Miss Dormer," he said, "permit me ure you that this distress is really uncalled Theodore is no worse now than he was when went to him, and nothing is more probable than that to-morrow will see him perfectly recovered. Forgive me, but I cannot bear to see you thus afflicted without sufficient cause."

When Claude began to speak, Venetia had turned away from him and concealed her face; but here she hastily interrupted him and replied:

- "Mr. Lermont, you are very kind; but you only speak thus because you are ignorant of the cause of the tears I was shedding when you entered." She paused.
  - "May I know it?" asked Claude.
- "In truth," she replied, speaking hurriedly and with agitation, "I am so distressed, so grieved, to think that I am the cause of Theodore's illness. If I had not called him back, perhaps he never would have suffered it."
- "Nay, this is indeed most unreasonable. The mischief was probably done before."
  - "Oh no, no; not at all probable."
- "At any rate it is not reasonable to reproach yourself for a mere accident."
  - "His mother reproached me."
- "But she would regret her hasty words, I am sure, if she knew the pain they have inflicted."

Venetia still looked unsatisfied, when Claude exclaimed:

"Will it be possible for Lord Llarnarmon to regret any illness that inspires so much interest in you?"

These words verified all Venetia's most annoying anticipations; and, full of vexation she angrily replied:

"Indeed I see nothing unreasonable or extradinary in the just feeling of sorrow that I have trayed for being the cause, whether real or appant, of suffering to my cousin, or of the slightest leasiness to one, whom I love so much as I do idy Llarnarmon. I am sorry that my feelings we been perceived by any one who thinks them surd; but you must allow me to request that u receive the explanation of them that I have ren you, and place no other construction upon im of your own."

She spoke haughtily, and repented of it before had finished; and she added with confusion: \*\* Forgive me, Mr. Lermont. I mean no reof; but I am of a candid nature, and cannot er to see myself misunderstood. Perhaps," she atinued with a blush, "it was very wrong of me attach any importance to your last words, or imagine that they had any meaning beyond a etty compliment. So let us change the subject, ly with one additional admonitory remark, that it were a compliment, as it was the first, so let it the last with which you honour me. Stop," she d playfully, raising her hand as Claude was Out to speak. "I know that the necessary asequence of a lady professing to dislike a comment is that she immediately draws one down On her head. But I, to prove my sincerity, will t wait to hear the intended one-so good night You!" and she held out her hand in token of ace, and left Claude not quite decided as to what



words of praise that her father had Claude. She perceived that he, like sensible of the singular gifts of inte possessed. She had learned from him value on such qualities, and she beliefather discovered as plainly as herself was

In one thing only failing of the bes That he was not so happy as the re

She had hitherto known nothing but indulgence from her father; if she h with restraint, it had been from her m theless the most gentle of mothers, who firmly withheld from her child all she deemed could be hurtful to mind a her daughter loved her not the less for Venetia!

Soft cradled thee thy fortune till to-d Thy duties thou couldest exercise in a



# CHAPTER XXXII.

Forty thousand brothers Could not with all their quantity of love Make up my sum.

HAMLET.

THE following morning, Theodore was considerably worse. The messenger, dispatched to summon Dr. Cowley, had returned with the information that he had on the previous day gone twenty miles to the other side of the county, and would cartainly not return before night; consequently in all probability would not arrive at the Castle before he following day.

This intelligence was truly alarming; and laude, who now fully shared Lady Llarnarmon's neasiness, proposed the immediate dispatch of nother messenger to entreat Dr. Cowley not to alay to set out for the Castle immediately on his rival at home, and to accept a bed there for the Sht. Fortunately he returned earlier than he expected; and this last message inducing him set out with all the expedition possible, he was the them about five o'clock in the day; but even the skilful physician perceived that his aid as but tardy. A fever had commenced of which could only attend the crisis with anxiety and

dread. That such was the case became howly more evident; but he could not resolve as yet to communicate to the unhappy Lady Llarnarmon all the apprehensions which filled his own mind.

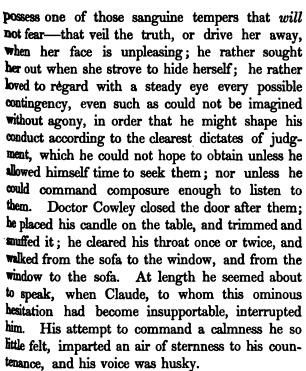
In these painful circumstances he thought of Claude, as the most fitting person to whom he could suggest the necessity of, in some measure, preparing the minds of his patient's friends and relations, for the fatal termination of his illness that might possibly ensue. It did not occur to him, and he never supposed that the ties of affection between this young man and his beloved patron, were so strong, that, on entering on this subject with him, he was about to encounter a scene little less distressing than he would have had to go through, even with the mother of his patient. Accordingly, after his entreaties had prevailed on Lady Llarnarmon to consent to seek some repose, before retiring to his own chamber, he turned to Claude and said:

"You, Sir, I believe, intend to pass the night in Lord Llarnarmon's room, do you not?"

"Yes, certainly," replied Claude.

"Will you then accompany me into mine for a few minutes first? I should like to say a few words to you, and to give you a direction or two."

Claude followed him uneasily; not that his apprehensions were excited by the Doctor's manner, which was perfectly calm, but because he had previously intended to seek in a private interview for the real statement of his opinion. Claude did not



"Sir," he began, "I entreat that you will not refuse to inform me exactly of your real opinion with regard to Lord Llarnarmon. With his mother you may perhaps think it right to dissemble, but with me you cannot deem such a precaution needful. I am a man, and whatever you have to say I must bear as a man."

"True, my dear Sir," said Dr. Cowley, much relieved by this commencement of the subject. "It was this very view of the case that induced me to

call you hither. To be open with you, though it is far from my intention to speak positively, I cannot but see that this is a case of imminent danger, and consequently of very uncertain termination. Still as it is scarcely likely to be very speedily decided, as many hours, perhaps days, of doubt still remain, I do not feel it my duty to communicate the opinion immediately to any one but yourself, and indeed—"

But here Doctor Cowley stopped, equally distressed and alarmed at the unforeseen effect of his words. The unhappy Claude, robbed of all his assumed firmness, listened to them as to the extinction of all hope, and with a countenance pale as death, and on which horror and anguish were most painfully depicted, sunk upon a seat, and placing his arms upon the table, bowed his head down on Much dismayed at the effect he had produced, and full of sincere commiseration for the agony he had caused, the first impulse of the kind-hearted physician was to attempt to do away with the impression he had made. He ran for a glass of water, which he tried to induce Claude to swallow, affirmed that he anticipated no immediate danger, that not improbably a favourable crisis might arrive, and that had he had the slightest idea how much Mr. Lermont's feelings were interested, he never would have spoken so abruptly. Claude little heeded his words: in truth he did not hear them. With a mighty struggle he resumed self-control sufficient to enable him to rise from his seat.

Speak to me no further at present," he said in p, stern voice, "I must begone."

it his limbs refused to obey the mandates of solute spirit, and he sank down again, shakke a man in an ague fit.

For God's sake, my dear young friend," said or Cowley, laying his hand upon him, "stay for the present, and do not attempt thus to at with your natural feelings. That you d seek my patient in this state I cannot perfor his sake, as much as for your own, I lit. I will go to him myself for a few hours; n here, and I will return to you as soon as I fit. This must surely be enough to satisfy

After a few moments' silence he added: re is something, my dear Mr. Lermont, in demeanour which convinces me that I have now al with one who has sense and spirit enough ide him through the severest trials. We are good judges of the characters of the people neet with. We are forced to discriminate ly. Do not let me find myself deceived in a stance. Remember that by the exertion of qualities, which are natural to you, you may yet prove of the greatest service to your poor l."

these words much to Dr. Cowley's relief, le burst into tears, and wept like a child; his flowing unchecked either by himself, or by ind and judicious companion. After a few ents of silent sympathy, he quitted him.

Scarcely had he left the room, when he reentered it.

"Good God!" said Claude, springing up, "what brings you hither?" The horrible apprehensions that seized him seemed to threaten his senses.

"Compose yourself, Mr. Lermont, I beseech you," said Dr. Cowley; "I came back to fetch the book which I am reading."

He approached the table, and taking it quitted the room again. This little circumstance almost extinguished Claude's gratitude for the physician's late tenderness, and yet it was no want of feeling that gave rise to it; it was merely the force of habit

Now let us leave Claude in that privacy which alone befits the wounded spirit in the first tumult of its grief; that privacy which is not solitude. Solitude would indeed, in such an hour, be maddening—the parent of despair! The sole balm for the afflicted is to be alone in the presence of the sole Being, who can read the feelings and thoughts of our hearts truly and entirely, for faint and imperfect is our expression of them to our fellowmen. How much more intimate is the connexion between the soul and its Creator, than between the soul and any of its fellow creatures!

Not even the tenderest heart, and next our own, Knows half the reasons why we smile and sigh.

Each in his hidden sphere of joy or woe
Our hermit spirits dwell, and range apart;
Our eyes see all around in gloom or glow—
Hues of their own, fresh borrowed from the heart.

Are we in sorrow? We can shed our tears in privacy, and wipe them carefully away; and calling up a smile more frequent and brighter (if not so placid) than the one we wear when we are at peace, we may deceive the eyes of those who love us best, when we come forth out of our chamber; but the tears which fell in secret were seen by our God. Having wept, we can give a feigned cause for our weeping; and those who are nearest to us, and know most of our thoughts and feelings will not guess the truth. But He knows the real source of every tear, the bitterness of every well-spring of which we have to drink. It is hardly possible for us, however much affection, warm and true, inclines us to sympathy, to enter into each other's feelings so as to know exactly what part of the grief that oppresses the sufferer, weighs most heavily on the heart; where the sore spot of the aching wound is—that spot which may not be touched or approached, the mere pointing of the finger towards it making us tremble with agony. But He knows all these things: He knows the one drop which, infused into our cup, turns it all to gall; he knows where the wound throbs and burns, and sees whenever a careless hand presses on it heedlessly, re-awaking all the anguish which has been almost nursed to sleep.

Have we not indeed a kind of intuitive conviction that we cannot *really* share the joys, or sorrows of others? For how often, when we see faces that we love, stained with tears and clouded

with despondency, do we ref the cause, abstain from qu being alone with them, and scious of the approaching that tremble on their lips! to seek this imperfect symp our knees, and call on our G fession. He will understand be imperfect and incoherent, express our meaning.

> And well it is for us our Go Alone our secret throbbings May readier spring to Heav On cloud-born idols of this

> For if one heart, in perfect Beat with another answering Weak mortals all entranced Nor listen for those purer st

And who has the power to lation to be compared to those Who else can bid us be of that we are journeying on changeable house, where the crying or pain,' and where from off all faces;' who can Him who has bought us with these habitations for those to who can learn these glad Him?

\* Kebl

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

Far from the hoped haven of reliefe.

Then sighing softly sore and inly deepe,
She shut up all her plaint in privy griefe,
For her great courage would not let her weepe.

SPENSER

AFTER the lapse of about an hour, Claude approached the doors of Theodore's chamber; he paused and listened intently;—so anxious was he to catch the smallest sound, that his heart seemed no longer to beat, and his respiration to cease. Was it fancy? Or did he hear a low continuous murmuring, a fretful voice, a plaintive cry? Could it be Theodore? he heard a movement, a footstep—he could bear suspense no longer, and quickly but gently opened the door, and entered.

Doctor Cowley was standing beside the bed in which Theodore was seated nearly upright. Good Heavens, how changed! Even since he saw him! His wild, bright eye, the scarlet spot upon his cheek, the otherwise unnatural whiteness of his skin, spoke of the rapid strides the foe within was making. No sooner did he catch sight of Claude, than he eagerly beckoned him towards him, and exclaimed in a voice of complaint: "Ah! dear

Claude, come to me, I am weary, very weary. When will this journey be at an end? I cannot go on thus; so much fatigue will kill me, and besides I wish so much to get home, and to see Venetia. I dreamt that she was ill, Claude; and so I set off, and now before I reach her, she will be dead, I know she will;" and he raised his hand to his burning forehead. Claude, shocked and terrified, cast an appealing glance upon Doctor Cowley, who was really dismayed, and disposed to be very angry at his sudden appearance.

"Did I not say that I would summon you when necessary," he began, drawing him aside; "and why are you here without? I shall not leave him to-night, and your attendance is of no use."

"I do not intend to leave this room again," replied Claude firmly; "unless you declare that my mere presence is positively injurious to him. I promise you that nothing shall shake my composure, nor will I agitate him in the smallest degree."

"You cannot answer for yourself, and you see that his head wanders; though this does not prove any material increase of danger, still—"

"I can answer for myself, and nothing but your positive command shall banish me hence."

"Claude, Claude," exclaimed Theodore, in a feeble voice, "will you too leave me in the hands of strangers?"

"Do you hear," said Claude; and Doctor Cowley perceiving the necessity of his stay, silently acquiesced. The night passed on without much alteration; his delirious fancies seemed to be of a less painful description, if Claude were beside him; but if he for a moment quitted him, he would utter bitter complaints and sad lamentations. His thoughts chiefly ran on Venetia, and on the belief that she was dying; and he added that he had resolved, if he found her dead, that he would die also; but he entreated them to keep this resolution from his mother.

Claude kept his promise: no word of grief or apprehension passed his lips; he remained unshaken and self-possessed; his hand bore every draught to the lips of the sufferer; supported his enfeebled form, smoothed his pillow, and obeyed every indication of a wish, while his heart was constantly employed in fervent aspirations to Heaven for support and aid.

How melancholy is the dawn of day in the chamber of the sick! The flickering, dying lamp, like the spark of life, only not extinguished; the worn, haggard looks of the watchers, seen by the cold grey light that is forcing its entrance; the yet more ghastly hue of the sufferer—the bed, looking so unlike the couch of repose, with its coverings cast here and there, by the restless tossings of the uneasy inmate,—and the remedies strewed around, their very number confessing their little efficacy!

During the whole of the following day, it was impossible to prevail on Claude to leave the side of Theodore for a moment; the little food he took

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was brought to him there, and he spent the weary hours in watching the alternations of delirium and of stupor, that succeeded each other. Another night and another day followed in which no amendment took place; and Claude was still unfailing in administering every service, and inflexible in his resolution to abide in the same station. On the third night (on which Dr. Cowley expected a crisis) Theodore was lying in a state of stupor, more alarming to the physician, than to any one besides; for in truth he knew not whether he would ever return to sensibility. He took the opportunity, afforded by this cessation of all call for exertion, to induce Claude to retire to his own room, to seek a brief period of repose, promising most solemnly to summon him at the expiration of a certain time, and before, if the slightest change took place.

The violence of Lady Llarnarmon's grief, at the first implied idea of danger, had been such that Dr. Cowley had positively prohibited her admittance into the sick room, declaring that he could not answer for the consequences of his patient's beholding her in such a condition. Venetia flew to attend on her with the fondest affection, and the tenderest sympathy. By every possible means she strove to soothe the anguish of her spirit, but in vain. No words, however holy, could check her grief; she rejected every hope, and appeared already the victim of despair. On this night, however, a change seemed to come over her; she grew calmer, but though less violent, was more

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i; an air of defiance sat on her lofty brow; rigid countenance wore an expression of fixed rmination, and she bid Venetia leave her, in a that permitted no reply. Venetia, sick at t, was about to comply, when Lady Llarnarmon lenly following her, caught her in her arms, strained her passionately to her bosom. Ve., willing to make one more effort, exclaimed: Let me stay with you, let me stay, and we will together."

No," replied Lady Llarnarmon, shuddering as spoke; "not yet, not yet! When I send for again, perhaps then we will do so." And in the tender beseeching of Venetia's eyes, let her depart.

### CHAPTER XXXIV.

Faut-il que mon crime l'entraîne?
Oh! mon fils que tes jours coûtent chers à ta mère.
Il ne me reste plus qu'à condamner mon fils.

RACINE.

Wearied beyond further powers of endurance, Claude at length consented to seek an hour of rest; and after seeing Dr. Cowley established beside the couch he was so loth to leave. entered his chamber, cast himself upon his bed, and fell at once into the heavy slumber of exhaustion. But his mind was too ill at ease to allow forgetfulness long to hold its blessed reign. Terrible thoughts soon began to arise, and to clothe themselves in frightful visions. At last, one more distressing than any that preceded it, arose. He believed that Venetia was near him, and in spite of himself, \* though honour upbraided, and though conscience condemned, he was telling her how well he loved her, how he had loved her always, how he had never seen her without loving her; and while kind words in answer seemed trembling on her lips, Lady Llarnarmon came with looks of hate and fury, and snatched her away; and Venetia, as she was borne along, seemed to change into Theodore, who looked back upon him with eyes streaming with tears, unspeakably reproachful, and Lady Llarnarmon returned to jeer scornfully at his accents of remorse. She placed a hand upon him that seemed
to burn the flesh, and to enter to the bone; and
then the consciousness that he was dreaming came
over him, and he struggled painfully and awoke.
And Lady Llarnarmon was standing beside him, with
one hand upon him, holding in the other a lamp,
by the light of which he beheld the deadly paleness
of her face, the agony inscribed on every feature,
the bloodless compressed lip, the glittering tearless
eye, and the painfully contracted frown on her brow.

"Good Heavens!" he groaned, "what has happened?"

"Nothing; he still lives, they say; but if you indeed wish that his life should be spared, rise and follow me."

Close to the room that Claude occupied, descended a flight of stairs that led directly to the chapel of the Castle. It was not commonly in use, but was preserved in the order of former days, and here still were celebrated any extraordinary ceremonies that took place in the family. It was at this altar that Theodora had pronounced her marriage vows; at yonder font her babe was held, believed to be the sole heir to all the honours of Llarnarmon, and in the vault beneath lay the body of her husband, beside the haughty old Lord, who had worked his will with them both. Lady Llarnarmon entered this chapel, and Claude sprang after her.

In a moment they were at the altar's foot, and the lady placed the lamp on the ground, and paced to and fro in much agitation; Claude stood motionless, regarding her with wonder. After walking once or twice the length of the chapel, when she reached him, she stopped, and exclaimed in a wild, hurried manner:

"Claude, I know that you hate me. Do not dispute what I say; be content that I should What better do I deserve at your hands? From the first day that you saw me, bound to you as I was by every tie of gratitude, you beheld me regard you with jealous fear and resentment; but you have borne with me for his sake—have you not?" she asked, in tones of most tender pathos; then, pausing not for a reply, she continued: "Yes, Claude, you love my child disinterestedlypurely; you love him as I love him: not as his dependants, who adore him as their lord, not as his equals, who seek him as a companion, not as those who fawn at his feet, and kiss his hand that it may load them with favours; you love him better than all these! You love him not for what he can be to you, but for what he is!"

Touched by the manner in which she so truly portrayed the character of his affections, Claude could only assent by silence; and she went on:

"You have a mysterious command over his destiny. You have once saved him from death; you are now about to receive a power which shall enable you to strip him of all that makes life

valuable—of honour, station, wealth; all that I have forfeited peace here and hope hereafter; to insure for him; and therefore, by the love you bear him, I beseech you, before you are possessed of this terrible power, to bind yourself by an irrevocable vow never to employ it against him. If any ill befal him, then indeed I look not for mercy at your hands."

Claude, really believing that she had from sorrow lost her reason, would have interrupted her, but Lady Theodora, waving her hand, rapidly continued:

"I call you hither to hear a secret that is bringing down the judgment of Heaven, not upon my head only but upon that of my innocent child—a secret, the revelation of which might well summon the dead from his grave, to quail before your indignation—a secret I believed buried in oblivion until the day of Judgment. But, oh God! of what avail is the fearful purchase, if he be taken away! And here at this holy altar am I fain to lay down this secret, and my honour, if you will assure me that I may trust to your love, that he shall not suffer by the repentance, as well as by the crime of his mother."

Bewildered as Claude was by the incoherence of Lady Llarnarmon's language and manner, he yet maintained sufficient self-possession to determine that she should not rob him of the direction of his own conduct; and that whatever might be the nature of her communication, he would insist on remaining free from any prior engagement with regard to his future actions; he therefore, with a stern and lofty composure, replied:

"Lady Llarnarmon, your secret must be revealed to me by your own free will; your words give no clue to its discovery. If you think of my attachment to your son as you have said you do, you can confide in its strength without any protestations on my part."

"If you really love him," said she fiercely, why refuse such a promise?"

"If you really believe that I love him, what greater satisfaction can such a promise give you?"

"Shrink from it, and I shall doubt the love," she replied with increasing vehemence.

"Doubt on, Lady Llarnarmon; he never has, I think he never will, doubt it! God grant that he may live to prove it further!"

The tone of humility and of penitence with which Lady Theodora had commenced, was disappearing, and she was fast regaining her native haughtiness. The inward bitterness of her soul would out, even though checked by the dictates of prudence, or the admonitions of contrition. Without listening to Claude's reply, she continued with scornful violence:

"And after all, what is your boasted love? You perhaps have thought that it was different, superior to, less earthly than mine; that mine was but the womanly feeling for the child I bore; but yours was no more than the call of nature, the link of blood! You are his brother! His father

your father! You were born in wedlock; you, Claude, you are the only rightful of Llarnarmon! And now may this tardy ession avert the bolt of Heaven from our heads!" oor Claude! Did he hear aright? The shock too great for his confounded senses; he tot-1, staggered, and fell against the column near the he was standing. Regardless of his emos, and engrossed by her own, Lady Theodora inued pacing to and fro, speaking rapidly as did so:

Say now, what has your love for him been pared with mine? What sacrifices have you e equal to mine? Have you endangered your soul for him as I have? Would you do so? no! Listen;" she said, coming close up to and putting her hand upon him, clammy and : "I stood by your father's death-bed. ed no other to draw near. I listened alone. norror! to the ravings of despair and remorse; erted that the upbraidings of conscience were wild dreams of delirium. I let him perish, , and perhaps soul, and called no priest to Alone I listened, I tell you, till I was ud. maddened by the horrors I heard, and why? nim! And now, did I believe that my anguish forcing me to reveal my secret to one capable pusing it, I would, like the Roman woman of pite my tongue from its root, and spit it upon ground! It has sometimes afforded me a

strange delight to think that while I was writing in agony, (as God knows I have writhed), he was daily enjoying the fruits of my sin, and of my sorrow. This idea has strengthened me to suffer far more than any other, far more than the dread of detection and fear of shame, though these, too, since you came hither, have tortured me almost be yond endurance. Thence was the wild and fruitless attempt I so lately made to remove you from my son. So acceptable to me was the prospect of banishing you from hence, that when such means offered as I did not venture to communicate to him, I planned that fatal visit which has brought these miserable consequences."

"Oh, Heavens!" exclaimed Claude, springing to his feet, his eye flashing with indignation, "have you never heard, never read in the Book of God, that the sins of parents shall be visited upon the children? If he die, you have killed him!"

This last confession had excited the wrath of Claude in a degree that all the preceding ones had failed to do; for in this he did indeed seem to behold most visibly the hand of Providence armed against the life of his beloved Theodore, in vengeance for the sins of his mother; and horror and despair entered his mind.

At these appalling words of reproach, the unhappy woman cast herself on her knees, and throwing her arms wildly over her head, before her lips could form a word of supplication, she fell heavily

forward on her face on the marble pavement. In great alarm, believing that his words had killed her, Claude hastened towards her, and raised her from the ground, fearing that her spirit had fled, 'yet unannealed' to Heaven's all-judging throne. To his infinite relief, however, she gradually returned to consciousness, and though she felt his support, she did not repulse him, but even continued to weep in his arms; her heart seemed softened within her, and at length they both seated themselves on the step of the altar, and she detailed to him some particulars of those past events, with which the reader is already acquainted. When she ended, she said mournfully:

"When he is restored to health, you must yourself decide on your course of action. Oh, Claude! bitterly you must hate me for your mother's sake, if not for your own; yet pity me too, for never from that hour have I known peace. Oh, what pangs can remorse inflict!"

The anguish of her tone wrung tears from Claude; she perceived his emotion, and rising from beside him, as if she feared that the sight of it would unnerve her, she again began to pace hastily to and fro, then suddenly stopped short and exclaimed:

"Theodore is at your mercy! Should Heaven spare his life, how will you act?"

A certain haughty and defying expression which her countenance had re-assumed, awoke in Claude that just feeling of aversion, which sentiments of pity had lulled to sleep. He rose, and interrupting her with a calm dignity, said:

"Hear me, Lady Llarnarmon: your communication is over. I leave you. I have uttered no promise, I am bound by none. I offer no pledge, no assurance of what my future conduct may be. The remembrance of what it has been may perhaps afford you some grounds of hope. Be that as it may, I have a feeling within me which makes me wish to see you less the slave of sin and error than you appear now to be. Before I quit you, I would bid you to kneel there and pray; pray for the forgiveness of heaven, and pray that I may have power to forgive."

And pointing towards the altar as he spoke, he turned from her with a bursting heart, and left her standing, speechless and motionless.



### CHAPTER XXXV.

In ogni risco, in ogni dubbia via, - fidata compagnia Tenesti al viver mio lieto e sereno. Che mesto e tenebroso fora stato E sarà, frate, senza te-Quasi stella del polo chiara e ferma Nelle fortune mie sì gravi, e'l porto Fosti dell' alma travagliata e stanca; La mia sola difesa e 'l mio conforto Contra le noje della vita inferma.

BRMBO.

CLAUDE, almost unconsciously, instead of returnto his own chamber, when he left Lady Llarnarn, sought that of Theodore, and noiselessly opening door he entered. His form immediately caught eye of Dr. Cowley who was sitting reading beside lamp, and who motioned to him to advance no her; but rising, led him from the room. ps, he sleeps," he whispered; "and it is of the lost importance that nothing should disturb him. not enter again. Go and take what rest you , and of the slightest change for better or for se you shall be informed."

Laude, who had endured hopelessness with so th fortitude, could ill support hope; and he fell ost senseless into the arms of the physician.

The new discovery he had made that the being he loved with so much devotion, was indeed his brother, contributed to render intolerable this suspense, and the few remaining hours of trial were more excruciating than any that had gone Solitude was little likely to dispose him to rest, and the time he spent in it was occupied in agonizing supplications in Theodore's behalf, in recalling every word of Lady Llarnarmon's confession, and in earnest prayer, that he might not now receive a more mortal injury than she had yet inflicted; that his soul might not be endangered by the tumult of passion awakened in it. It was not till the noon of the following day that Theodore awoke; he feebly opened his eyes, and the light of reason dawned in them; he then sank again to sleep. The happy tidings spread throughout the Castle, and Venetia was the joyful bearer of them to her friend. She flew in haste to the door of her chamber, but there she paused to moderate her transports, for though she knew that Lady Llarnarmon was awaiting in suspense the result of any change, she did not dare to make her communication without the greatest caution. She had not seen her since the agitated parting on the preceding night, and she trusted and fervently prayed that when she should find herself the object of so much mercy, she would lift her heart in more holy aspirations than any she had known her to breathe in the hours of trial. Venetia had been filled with sorrow and dismay, on beholding the

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frantic and unbending manner in which Lady Llarnarmon had met the chastening dispensations of Providence. It was so different to what she had hitherto been familiar with; to the placid, all enduring resignation exercised by her own mother, and inculcated by her as one of the earliest lessons she wished her child to learn. Venetia had naturally been restrained from giving any expression to these feelings of astonishment and disapprobation by the lively compassion Lady Llarnarmon inspired, and by the remembrance that she had hitherto respected as well as loved her. The great difference of age between them, also seemed as if it ought to seal her lips from reproof. Nevertheless she feared to leave unexecuted the duty of a real friend, if she did not seek to speak a word in season, or even if Lady Llarnarmon would consider it such, out of season. Besides, her very task here was to soothe and console her; and what other means could she employ? Actuated by this reasoning, she had spoken, but hitherto in vain; and her last attempt we have related. Now another instrument for effecting a change in Lady Llarnarmon's heart was placed in her hands, and with the greatest anxiety she prepared to employ it; nor was she here doomed to be altogether disappointed. No sooner had Lady Llarnarmon learned from her trembling lips the happy tidings, than she sank upon her knees, and poured forth the warmest expressions of joy and gratitude, that it was possible for the human tongue to frame; then clasping Venetia to her

bosom, they prayed together with profuse tears thankfulness that were as balm to their hearts.

Thus, as if to confirm Lady Llarnarmon's id that her son's illness was a direct judgment for Heaven for sin committed, from the very day, me hour of her confession, Theodore appeared to men and this merciful dispensation of Providence fill her heart with too much awe, to permit her as y to regret her repentance. Her happiness was a time, even unalloyed by fear; she could not dread Claude, for he was rejoicing with her.

But though the appalling threat of danger w withdrawn, recovery was tedious; and here fre and even more touching proofs of Claude's affe tion were made manifest in the unwearied patien with which he attended on his brother in the lor monotonous days of convalescence, than even i his passionate devotion in the hour of peril. woman could have surpassed him in tenderne and watchfulness of Theodore's every wish an Not his very mother, who loved him wit such intensity of feeling, could curb her restless an unquiet spirit, so as to attend upon him with th same subdued patience. For a time, this superior interest banished every other thought from Claude breast; his love for Venetia lay dormant; Lad Llarnarmon's revelation seemed forgotten, and h gave no manifestation by deed or word of wha his future actions would be. At length, as Theo dore regained his health, Claude became les engrossed by his care, and determined to seel

erview with Lady Llarnarmon, which he obwith difficulty, for since that terrible night ad sedulously avoided any communication She had indeed at first been so ill, as quit her own apartment for many days; and he saw her again, he was really shocked by teration in her countenance; her eye had lost e, and acquired a hollowness around it, that to its intense expression of anxiety. Her voice was changed, and a feeling of pity g up in his heart at beholding her thus, so that nost forgot the justice of his resentment. she have remained thus humbled, it would os have been well for her, for Claude had too a nature to trample on the fallen. But peris was her situation, dependent as she felt hern his mercy, she could not plead for mercy; ould not restrain the haughty nature that d only additional bitterness from the volunhumiliation it had undergone. Undeserved rtunes are often supported with the meekest ation, but the galling weight of those which incurs only makes the degraded spirit of the espiser more rebellious than before; and evident that Lady Llarnarmon could scarcely a from adding insult to injury. Filial piety g now first acquired a definite object, caused eart of Claude to yearn with tenderness tothe mother who had borne him in innocence, tho had received so cruel a guerdon for her He felt a longing too to be enabled to absolve his father, and to believe that only the haughty and arbitrary spirit of Lady Theodora had worked this great wrong. Having come to this determination, he sought an opportunity of requesting her to see him in private; and one day when they were together in Theodore's apartment, seeing that his eyes were closed, and that he seemed to sleep, he rose quietly, and crossing the room to the window at which Lady Llarnarmon was seated reading, he said to her in a low, earnest voice:

"Lady Llarnarmon, I wish very much to have some conversation with you."

Lady Llarnarmon raised her eyes slowly from her book, and fixed them full upon him. Any one who had surveyed their countenances at that moment, and had been bid to say which of those two persons had cause to dread the other, would have given the verdict against Claude, rather than against his haughty opponent: for, regarding his speech, respectful as was the tone in which he uttered it, in the light of a challenge, all her former pride arose within her, and imparted an air of indomitable resolution to her demeanour; while Claude feeling what a terror his words must inspire, and what shame and dread she must experience, changed colour as he spoke, and his lip quivered with emotion.

She closed the book she held, and laid it down beside her; then rising from her seat with the utmost stateliness, she said:

"Let it then be now. My son appears to sleep,

and needs neither of us. Come to me in my boudoir in a few minutes." She left the room, and Lermont, amazed at her self-possession, shortly followed her. When he entered, she was standing, as if she meant the conference to be but short; her face had become of an ashy paleness; her hand was resting on the table beside her, and it trembled violently; the moment that she became aware of this, she removed it, and folding both her hands tranquilly, addressed Claude:

"Why do you seek me, Mr. Lermont," she said, "what would you with me?"

"I should have supposed," replied Claude in a firm voice, "that Lady Llarnarmon would not have been at a loss for the cause of such a desire on my part, as that I have expressed. Some nights have passed now since our last eventful conversation. My brother's health, (said he with an emphasis on the word 'brother,' that seemed to thrill through Lady Llarnarmon's whole frame) has engrossed me too much to allow me to spare even my thoughts to the consideration of anything not immediately concerning it; but you cannot suppose that the brief and incoherent manner in which you disclosed to me the authors of my being, should suffice to satisfy the desires, the yearnings of a heart that had never yet known a parent. Oh! Lady Llarnarmon, be not so cruel! Think of the love Theodore bears to you, and judge of my feelings by what you can imagine that his would be. Did you never love your parents yourself? But it is impossible that you should know, or picture to yourself all that I have felt,—the weight of shame that has crushed my spirit."

Lady Llarnarmon appeared touched by his language; and seating herself as if becoming more willing to prolong the conversation, she said:

"Mr. Lermont, any expression of sympathy or compassion from me would be an insult. I am, however, disposed to show you that I am not untouched by your words, by inflicting on myself the excruciating task of repeating to you every occurrence of my past life which in any way bears upon you."

So saying, she related to him how she had quitted Llarnarmon after first learning the secret of his existence, and had resolved to remain in total ignorance of all the after transactions of Lord Llarnarmon and his father, and how she had always preserved this resolution unbroken until her husband's death, even until his own appearance at the Castle.

"I found," she continued, "some relics in the most private repositories of your father, which shall now be placed in your possession. The great means of atonement I have, you know, already placed in your hands; and with you the employment of them rests."

She paused, and Claude exclaimed with eagerness:

"Give me at once those precious relics, I beseech you!" Lady Llarnarmon rose and left the room, retiring into an inner one. Here she again approached that cabinet which she had opened on the first night of Claude's arrival at the Castle, and again took from it the picture which had so convincingly revealed to her his origin, and some papers, which she turned doubtingly over, and examined them again and again with trepidation. At last she returned with them to Claude, and laid them all before him.

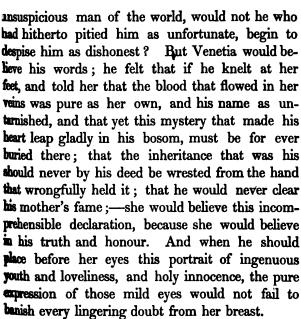
His eye fell immediately upon the picture, and he regarded the angelic countenance which it pourtrayed for a few moments in tender silence; then suddenly burying his face in his hands, he burst into a flood of tears. Lady Llarnarmon surveyed him with an expression of intense horror and remorse; then starting from her seat, in uncontrollable agitation, she exclaimed:

"Oh, injured saint! would that I could yet implore thy forgiveness! Claude, Claude, she died before he ever saw me! I wronged not her, but you only."

Her anguish was unheeded by Claude in his own ll-absorbing grief; and leaving her hastily, he went his own chamber, bearing with him the treasures he had resigned. Among them he selected he farewell letter of his mother, her picture, and lock of golden hair, as most precious in his less, though the other papers contained the conmutation of his being indeed the luckless off-pring of these ill-fated parents, for among them



¿Lady Llarnarmon was th Chanley his head on his l Commeditation, striving to reco mer his spirit, which it had hi wexercise in spite of the revulsion abce in every thought and feeling. remembrance that had hitherto bl and discouraged every endeavour; hsed his energies, and rendered available in his eyes; the blot of il had destroyed the desire of the att or of wealth, was now removed: a l existence would, he knew, obscure estimation every excellence, and atta grace to the name he bore. He no without presumption; he was her e might be, if he would, more than I and fortune; nodegradation could for of her affections upon him, and ev his poverty, it was stained by no



Such was the reverie into which Claude had fallen; but he started from it at remembering that from the day that he should seek Venetia's love, he must become his brother's rival.

# CHAPTER XXXVI.

Dunque, O! ver me non mai placabil donna, Non v' ha forza di tempo o d'opre, modo Che un cotal poco rammollisca, o acqueti L'ira tua?

ALFIERI.

Je sais

Que tous mes pas vers vous sont autant de parjures. Je le sais, j'en rougis.

RACINE.

From that day, the longer Claude reflected on Lady Llarnarmon's conduct, the less he saw in it to invite him to pardon her, the more to move his soul to just disdain. What a shadow of reparation had she offered, when, worked on by terror, not repentance, she had affected to place his fortunes in his own hands! He despised her for her ungenerous cruelty, and yet more for stooping to wear this flimsy veil to him, and to her conscience. Still it was by her unworthy subterfuge that he was empowered to save Theodore from the visitation of his parents' crime; and this recollection made him rejoice in it. It was, however, impossible so to rule his conduct as to satisfy himself and her. might teach himself, but he could not teach her, to forget that he had learnt to despise her, that she had been his enemy and his injurer, that she was always at his mercy, in subjection to him, bound

slave by the heavy chain of uncancelled obliga-1-a galling one to wear? Nor was he altoher ignorant that Lady Llarnarmon had a further se for animosity. Theodore's health, even before terrible illness, had been a constant source of iety to her, and to secure his happiness was great aim of her life. Though ambitious, she ld not be mercenary. She was perfectly aware t Mr. Dormer's fortune was small, and the por-1 that he could give his daughter very insigcant; yet from the time she knew her young sin, she acknowledged that the peculiar lovelis of her person and her character rendered her ve all others worthy to obtain the affections of In this hope she planned Venetia's visit England, and had for a while resolutely shut her · to the fact, that in spite of the affectionate inst with which Theodore inspired his young tive, she was equally far from perceiving the ure of his sentiments, and from sharing in them. the arrival of Claude, she could no longer reto recognise that, excellent and endearing as Theodore's character, yet 'seldom youth of a soft mould is loved again,' and that now for first time was love stealing into a heart, where verto only friendship had been admitted. Nor 3 the deep passion which Claude so anxiously I successfully disguised from the object of it realed from her; she alike distrusted his will. d his power long to wear an effectual veil; d believed that any revelation of it, accidental or VOL. III.

designed, would excite sensations in Venetia's bosom that would defeat her designs and Theodore's hopes. This dread increased the bitterness of her feelings towards Claude, but his conduct still afforded her no pretext for open blame. His deferential manner, respectful, but never bordering on sycophancy, and the cordial familiarity with which Mr. Dormer and Lord Llarnarmon treated him, placed him on a footing secure from insult or neglect.

Venetia watched with amazement the estrangement which, by slow degrees, she discovered to exist between the mother and the friend of Theo-By a fruitless scrutiny she attempted to arrive at the secret cause of an effect so much to be lamented, and at last (so much of the truth was buried in obscurity) she could only come to the same conclusion which cost the heart of Theodore so severe a pang, namely, that his warm return of Claude's affection excited Lady Llarnarmon's jeslousy. This supposed discovery, added to other observations made in daily intercourse, and to the remembrance of her vehement impatience in affliction, considerably lowered Venetia's estimation of her friend's character, and inclined her to regard as questionable much that she would once have allowed to pass in implicit confidence. She began also to feel that indignation which the sight of injustice naturally awakens in a generous heart, and to long to side with the aggressed against the aggressor. In spite of the whispers of prudence and delicacy, which bid her beware of her own

heart, she could sometimes scarcely refrain from expostulation and when she succeeded in imposing an unwilling silence on herself, her eloquent countenance betrayed all that she would fain have said, and drew down upon her as great a share of Lady Llarnarmon's resentment as words could have provoked. The latter was keenly wounded to find one she had so deeply injured standing ever in her way; robbing her of the esteem she most prized. rivalling her son in the affections of the woman he loved. The thought sometimes crossed her mind. that if Theodore knew the tenderness that was gradually ripening in the breasts of Claude and of Venetia, he might be taught to suspect his friend of treachery, and become willing to banish him from his side. But this dangerously tempting idea was followed by a dread that its prosecution might cause even Claude's powers of endurance to fail. He might be provoked to turn upon them both in anger, and bring down ruin on their heads. The hazard was too great, and calm reflection saved her from the commission of this new crime. Llarnarmon was forced to resign herself to the hope that her plans might possibly be effected by an approaching change of circumstances, for the time was fast arriving for Mr. Dormer to quit England in order to rejoin Lady Esther Dormer in Italy for Lord Llarnarmon and his mother the winter. proposed to quit the Castle immediately afterwards, and to go to town, in order that the former might consult a physician of eminence with regard to his

failing health, which was now a source of the greatest uneasiness to Lady Llarnarmon; and Mr. Dormer did not conceal from her that he thought her alarm but too well-founded. Indeed, when he viewed the wasted form and hectic cheek of his young relative, Mr. Dormer felt grateful to Providence that the attachment to which he had looked forward as so likely to spring up between the two cousins did not appear to exist. He thought that his daughter's spirits had suffered much from the scenes of gloom and sorrow she had lately witnessed, and he became desirous to remove her from them, and to restore her to her mother; but further than this, he read not the secret of her increasing despondency. Claude felt so much anguish at the prospect of bidding farewell to Venetia, probably for ever, that he became almost hopeless of being able to master his feelings, while the betrayal of them at such a moment was, he knew, totally inconsistent with his honour. He therefore resolved, now that Theodore could well dispense with his daily attendance, to propose to visit Mr. Mordaunt, leaving it uncertain whether his return would ar would not precede Mr. Dormer's departure. As soon as he should arrive at Dinmore, he designed to write from thence, to inform them that he intended to prolong his absence till Mr. Dormer and his daughter should have left the Castle, and Lord Llarnarmon need his presence to replace the loss of their society. He proceeded to execute this design with inflexible resolution. He commu-

nicated his intentions to Theodore, and he wrote them to Mr. Mordaunt. From the first he did not encounter the opposition he had looked for, and from the second he received an answer full of joy and affection. Theodore made no comment on Mr. Mordaunt's letter, nor objected to Claude's immediate compliance with it. He sent many kind messages to his old preceptor, and regretted that it was impossible for him to accompany Lermont. Claude, though he still kept secret his intention of prolonging his absence, could not reconcile himself to quitting Mr. Dormer without some expression of the gratitude which he felt for all that gentleman's uncalled for kindness towards him: for the interest he had manifested, and the friendly council of which he had been lavish.

Mr. Dormer had become very weary of his sojourn at the Castle; now that he was preparing to depart, his spirits rallied, and he became proportionately good-humoured, and willing to be pleased with every one. He listened to Claude with great kindness, and told him that he should keep him in his mind, and serve his interest whenever an opportunity offered; if he ever happened to try his fortunes in Italy, he would always find his house open to him, and his patronage, as far as it could advantage him, should be his.

"Thank you, Sir," replied Claude; "but I fear that this is the very last of all your kind offers of which I can ever propose to avail myself. I can never leave Lord Llarnarmon's side until his health

be re-established. My futu depend entirely upon his; and interest will ever be of suffirate us."

Mr. Dormer replied to this that spoke both pity and surp

"Of course, Mr. Lermont, alone can judge in this case lowed to sav that I think it i too late for you to adopt this my young friend, that nothin mon degree of interest in induce me to speak in a way wound your feelings. I have fond of running the risk of exc unwelcome advice, but I wou what you must, however reluct that Lord Llarnarmon's he any length of life. If you po offers he make you at present look to for the future? tions perhaps? Such hope I have observed, and I know you hold no high place in his this be visible now, when you tude are enforced by the pres will it be hereafter?"

"Excuse me, Mr. Dormer,
"I acknowledge the truth of
feel most deeply the kindne
express them; but permit:

I entertain no such vain expectations as those you have described. Should anything happen to Lord Llarnarmon, (which God forbid, and I am willing to consecrate my whole life, if need be, to an endeavour to guard him from evil) I have means which I shall then employ, of placing myself in circumstances of greater independence than I have hitherto possessed. At present my sole desire is to remain beside him; if I am unhappy enough to lose him, my hopes and wishes upon this earth will be still more circumscribed than they now are."

He spoke these last words in a tone of such deep feeling that Mr. Dormer was too much touched to expostulate any longer with him on the apparent imprudence of his conduct, or to attempt to gratify the curiosity which was excited by his allusion to the existence of circumstances which obviated this alleged objection to it.

At dinner the conversation turned upon Claude's departure which was to take place at break of day. Claude could not divest himself of the impression that Miss Dormer looked pale, and was more silent than usual. From the moment that he made this observation, or fancied that he made it, his own spirits failed him; and no sooner was he left alone with Theodore and Mr. Dormer, than making some trivial excuse for leaving them, he quitted the house impatiently, and sought the shade of the majestic avenue of trees that on one side approached the Castle. Invited by the balmy stillness of the evening, and the calm soli-

tude that reigned there, he wandered on lost in meditating on all the emotions that Venetia's presence had excited in him from the day he knew her; emotions never more to be experienced; born in her presence, to die in her absence. Feeling convinced as he did that Venetia's heart was at least not indifferent to him, this very conviction which might have imparted an ecstasy of delight to another, could only add fresh bitterness to the anguish with which he regarded the moment of departure. As he walked on, he suddenly perceived on a seat beneath the shade of overhanging boughs, a form which he instantly recognised as that of Venetia. He started in surprise, and then paused to see if she were sensible of his approach; obscure as was the light by which he surveyed her, he could discover that her whole attitude was expressive of the deepest despondency. withdraw, he resolved to advance, for to watch her unperceived was treacherous. He therefore approached her, and said:

"Are you not afraid of the evening dews, Miss Dormer?"

She started at the sound of his voice, and hastily rising, murmured some inaudible reply.

And it was beneath the very trees under which Claude and Venetia were now standing, that Lady Llarnarmon in years past, had sought and learnt from the faltering lips of Eustace, the secret of Claude's existence.

Claude involuntarily proffered his arm, which

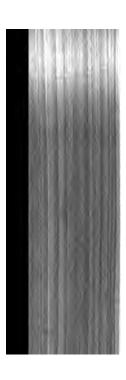
Venetia took, and for a few moments they walked on in silence. She was the first to speak; though her voice was agitated, she seemed resolved not to desist from the attempt, and she said:

"You will not be long absent from my cousin, I trust, Mr. Lermont, for I am sure he can ill spare you."

"Had I thought that, Miss Dormer, I would not have quitted him; and it was the idea that he would miss me little while Mr. Dormer and yourself are here, that induced me to choose this time for doing so."

"You will return to him then after our departure?" asked Venetia in a low trembling voice.

Claude made no answer; a few steps more brought them to the close of the avenue, and the mellow light of the rising moon mingling as it did with the last vivid sunbeams, fell full upon them as they emerged from the shade. Claude raised his eyes to Venetia's face, and he saw that tears, freshly shed, were glistening on her cheek. Overcome by emotion he stopped short; yet, resolutely mastering his feelings, he again proceeded without giving expression to them. They were now very near the house: they could even hear voices from the open window: another moment and their intercourse should close, perhaps for ever; and the sentiments of either heart be for ever doomed to secrecy. Still Claude was silent, as though a spell were on He felt that Venetia's streaming eyes were turned upon him with an imploring gaze, and



longer be alone—perhaps never more and taking her hand impetuously in h ing it with a gesture of despair, th that Claude uttered, were:

"God bless you, Venetia, God f you!"

And Venetia, no longer strugglir her tears, in a voice choked by sobs, scarcely audible accents the same hea

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

How hard the task to heal the bleeding heart, To bid the still recurring thought depart, Tame the fierce grief and stem the rising sigh, And curb rebellious passion with reply; Calmly to dwell on all that pleased before, And yet to know that all shall please no more.

CRABBE.

I mourn o'er hours that shall no more return; Would they had never been, or were to come!

As soon as Claude had quitted Venetia she red immediately to her own chamber, feeling
self too incapable of meeting him again in the
sence of others, or in any circumstances that
uld exact the control of her emotions, to regard
comments that might be made on her absence.
length she sought her couch with a passionate
ress; but her eyelids refused to close; the tide
grief is not so quickly stemmed; despair has its
roxysms as well as its sullen moodiness; and
rope, the blameless parasite of woe,' long
there appear no signs of its existence and
thing to feed it, will start up afresh; as expiring

embers will emit many a fitful blaze when their heat seemed extinct.

"Was I with him but now, and is he gone for ever?" she asked herself. "Have I no expectation, no hope of ever seeing him again? Are we from this hour to be separated from each other as entirely as if one of us were dead? To learn perhaps to love others, and to forget this brief dream as if it had never been? I cannot!" Then starting up, she would exclaim: "It is not yet too late. I will go, and kneel to my father, and say: Do not kill your child! I will say: Father, remember all the promises you made my mother to watch over, and cherish me, while I was absent from her, and that nothing, under your control, should prevent you from restoring me to her when the year was over. Do not take me back brokenhearted to die!" In the midst of this wild rambling, alarmed at her own vehemence, she would check herself, and lying down, try to soothe herself to sleep. This forced composure she would maintain for a few minutes, and then all her former distraction of mind would return. The dawn of day was approaching, and with the first ray of light she left her bed, and opening her desk, drew forth some letters from her mother, and placed herself near the window. Her eyes swam with tears, as they gazed on expressions dictated by the tenderest affection that ever dwelt in mortal boson As she read these earnest prayers for her welfareshe felt that she too must pray, and seeking that y Book which can nerve the tenderest and weakest art to the firm endurance of sorrow, she opened before her, and read and prayed. Thus occupied, postole gradually over her, and her head and a sank down upon the open book, in whose ceful words she had found the balm that lulled to repose.

Morning came, and the bright warm rays of sun broke in, and woke her. She started up, a moment unconscious how or why she was re, and why she was not at rest in her accusred place; but the remembrance of the past ning flashed across her mind, and when she by the time that now Claude was indeed gone, wept to think that though she had spent the ht in watching and weeping, she had overslept hour in which he had been really separated on her for ever. But she knew that it was Decoming in her to betray her own feelings, I a breach of honour to declare those which she y guessed to be Claude's, and which he had chosen leave unacknowledged. Wrestling with her akness, she exclaimed: "Did I deceive myself Thaps not unwillfully) when I trusted that I ald stand 'secure in guarded coldness?' moment of trial am I to find past resolutions of She felt most unwilling to quit her om, and half resolved to feign, or indeed more dy, to confess sickness. Venetia possessed little that reserve that can draw an impenetrable veil all the deepest feelings of the heart; and she

feared that an attempt to conceal from Lady Llarnarmon and her son (her father's observations she dreaded less) 'the tyrant spirit of her thought,' would task her far beyond her powers. resolved however to assume, if possible, such an air of indifference as should disarm suspicion, and a distant reserve that should discourage inquiry. On joining her family, she accordingly set about her usual occupations with more than common assiduity. She supported her share of the general conversation with more than ordinary liveliness. She saw that mirth jarred on Theodore's depressed spirits, and vet she could not check herself. The restlessness she felt rendered her incapable of yielding her attention to any one object. At length she found herself alone with Theodore, and greatly agitated she rose to leave the room, when he, raising himself languidly on the sofa on which he was reclining, called to her to return. She came back and seated herself beside him: "What is it you wish, dear cousin?" she said tenderly, leaning over him.

"Don't leave me, dear Venetia," he said, taking her hand, "don't leave me. I am so very lonely to-day."

Venetia's eyes were filled with tears. She felt that Theodore was looking upon her with profound and melancholy interest. She shrank from this scrutiny; she was grieved for the pain which she knew it would cause him to read her heart; and she could not endure that those feelings, of which she must never confess to him who was the object, should be laid bare to any other eye. A burning colour rose on her cheek, and she hastily withdrew her hand. Then making an effort to speak calmly, she replied: "Do not say so, dear Theodore, you will soon have your friend again—when we are gone."

"Why can I not have you both," said Theodore mournfully; "you both love me. Dearest Venetia, if I am right in believing that you feel compassion for one so young, yet apparently doomed to wear away life in sickness and pain, if you ever entertain a momentary regret in thinking how much more I have loved you than you can ever love me, I beseech you to promise me that if my service or my sympathy can avail you aught, now, or in future, that you will come and seek council and aid from me as you would from a brother; and give me, oh give me in return what you can give—a sister's love!"

· Venetia, overcome by her emotion, held out her hand to him, and turning aside her head, wept bitterly. Theodore took it, and pressed it to his lips. After a few moments' silence, he said: "You may leave me now, dearest." And she rose, and left him.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The secrets of my heart.

All my engagements I will construe to thee,
All the charactery of my sad brows.

PORTIA.—I have made strong proof of my constancy.

JULIUS CASAR.

MR. MORDAUNT, who loved Claude as a son, rejoiced to welcome him to his home again; he was desirous to hear an exact account of everything that had happened to him at the Castle, and listened with unwearied attention to all he told relating to Lady Llarnarmon and Theodore.

But the evident dejection that Claude's countenance and manner betrayed in spite of himself, could not fail to alarm one so tenderly watchful of everything concerning him. He was anxious to ascertain the secret spring of this sadness, and Claude did not long delay to account for it in a manner that caused him nearly equal pain; by declaring the apprehension excited by Theodore's state of health, which did indeed constitute a great share of that insuperable gloom that oppressed his spirits. This was a more than sufficient explanation for Mr. Mordaunt, and though before he received it, he had regretted that so little had as yet been effected in furtherance of Claude's world-

y interests, he did not now for a moment feel lisposed to combat his designed self-abnegation, and complete devotion of every faculty to the ervice of his suffering friend; and he trusted that e might not go unrewarded. Claude did not orget Ruth; his next employment was to visit ver, and from this interview he expected to erive more pleasure and consolation than from ny other occurrence to which he could at present ook forward. No brother ever regarded a sister with more tenderness, than Claude felt towards this soor blind girl. There was an unison between them of thought, and feeling, and early association that no distance of time or place could destroy; and there is moreover a native, innate refinement of sensibility never to be acquired, and scarcely to be increased by cultivation, which forms an indissoluble bond between every heart that recognizes it as the prevailing sentiment. Whatever the situation, or the education; the outward form or demeanour; the possessor of the precious gem forms a link in that chain of hearts that ever, even earth, respond to each other, endeared and mited by a sympathy to be perfected in Heaen i

Nor indeed was fickleness a thing that had any ace in Claude's heart. A singular constancy arked both his affections and his purposes. He himself well aware of this unchangeableness of nature, conscious that a wound his spirit once exived was slow to heal, that a pang once exienced was sure again to be felt.

This conviction led him to arm himself resolutely against the impulses of feeling, and steadily to refuse admittance into his heart to many s tender emotion that was fain to rise there; and by the unremitting exertion of command o thought, word and action, he maintained the powe of control over every rebellious passion. But a with Ruth he enjoyed the delight of perfect con fidence, he ardently desired to see her again although resolved, and this resolution weight heavily on his heart, that even from her he mu withhold the communication which Lady Llarns mon had made to him, and which he solemnly d termined never to reveal to any human being. A other sentiments, joys, cares, and sorrows, he w eager to pour into her willing ear, and to seek h ready sympathy.

Grierson was absent when Claude arrived, which caused him little regret. He hastily inquired for Ruth, and went himself to seek her. She has been aware of his visit to Dinmore, and she receive him with a joy so silent, that at first he almost doubted if it were as great as his own. Por Ruth! hers was a joy 'that passed show.' Be though he found her what he left her, the san unmurmuring, placid, gentle being, living but others, evincing no emotion but for others, no gribut for their woes, no anxiety but for their intrests, no exultation but for their joys, still, in the first meeting, Claude could not resolve to unweven to her all the feelings of his heart, and quitted her, having scarcely mentioned Venetic

name, or described her many charms, or told her how much he was sure she would have loved her, had she known her as he had.

After a short period of time had elapsed, he received a letter from Lord Llarnarmon from London. relating to him the result of his conference with Dr. Armitage, (the medical man whom he had consulted) and informing him, that it was his design to leave England for the approaching winter. It was true that Theodore did not ask him to accompany him, but Claude knew his brother's heart too well to doubt for a moment of his desire that he should do so. Since he had become assured of the link of nature which bound them. Claude had laid aside (perhaps half unconsciously) all that reserve, and shyness of open demonstrations of love, which might have led to a misconception of his feelings. He now unhesitatingly, and as it were in scorn of any misconstructions, malevolent or undesigned, that might be put upon his conduct, came forward on every occasion to proffer every service, and to avow the ardour and the tenderness of his attachment. His resolution, therefore, to accompany Theodore whithersoever he might bend his steps, was formed even before he had finished the letter; he placed it in Mr. Mordaunt's hands without speaking, until he also had perused it. He then said:

<sup>&</sup>quot;Of course I go with him."

<sup>&</sup>quot;Shall you come to that decision without further consideration?" asked Mr. Mordaunt.

"Ay," said Claude, "he will not oppose it, and no one else shall."

"Surely," said Mr. Mordaunt, after a short pause, "his mother will receive such a proposition with the utmost gratitude."

"I look," said Claude with a smile that had something of bitterness in it, "for no such return at her hands; but it is not gratitude that I ask. I wish to be with Theodore, to watch beside him, and to serve him, and he will love me in return. I do not wish for gratitude. In truth," continued he anxiously after a few moments' thought, " I fear that my proposal, instead of awaking any such sentiments in Lady Llarnarmon's bosom, will, on the contrary, only embitter those feelings of enmity which I have told you I have found her hitherto to entertain towards me: but this consideration cannot influence my conduct. I shall never be dependent on Ladv Llarnarmon's enmity or favour; and were it in her power to ruin and destroy every prospect of my life, her threats would never avail to drive me from my station beside my friend."

Claude spoke these words with 'such a confirmed countenance,' that Mr. Mordaunt would have deemed it useless, even had he been so disposed, to offer any opposition to them. After a pause he added:

"Let me see you again before you despatch your answer, Claude."

"You shall see my answer, if you will," returned Claude with an air of affectionate deference, and leaving him, he mounted his pony, and rode off to the farm that he might see Ruth, and talk to her of his present designs. When he arrived there, he entered the garden, expecting to find Ruth; for the day was one of those balmy days of autumn, that seem full of lingering fondness for the summer, and approach winter reluctantly. He was not mistaken; Ruth was seated within the bower which he himself had planted for her. He advanced towards her, and placing himself beside her, took her hand affectionately, and said:

"It is I, dear Ruth, it is Claude."

"Yes," she said, "I knew it."

The tenderness of her voice, as she uttered these words, affected Claude; and he paused for a few moments, feeling that what he had to say would give her pain. At length he began:

"I am going away, Ruth. Lord Llarnarmon is soing abroad, and I must go with him."

Ruth made no reply; her hand, which she did to withdraw, trembled within his, and the tears slowly down her cheeks. At length she said, and said, but, oh! how gently:

Claude felt these words almost as a reproach, could not reproach felt feel, that he had been effectually estranged from her from the hour when he had left her ather's house; and in that short interval of silence, her mind had wandered back to those days

of her childhood, which, though dark and someful, had still been the least melancholy of her life; when, though she could not look upon him, she knew him to be near her; when, though the sun rose not for her, yet his welcoming voice told her it was morning; when his hand led her to her customary seat, and at their otherwise but unsocial meal, prepared and placed her food before her; when, in the silent watches of the night, she might at least think that he slumbered beneath the same roof: but more than all, she thought of it as the time when he could breathe to her every care and sorrow that grieved his spirit; when, even if without aid, he could not be without sympathy. Her tears flowed, and Claude sought to dry them; but Ruth hastily brushed them away, and began to talk to him cheerfully of himself.

She had a peculiar power of detaching her mind from all considerations connected merely with herself, and of turning it wholly to the concerns of those she loved. Many, very many, desire to be loved, but few are content to love: Ruth was one of these few. She very seldom spoke of her feelings, her sorrows, her hopes, or her wishes; but she was at all times ready to listen to the expression of those of others. She forgot herself so entirely as to lead others to forget her; and full of generosity and delicacy as was Claude, yet such was now the case even with him; and in a few moments he was engrossed in detailing to Ruth

that he had ever experienced since he had left amore.

He described Venetia to her; he described her he saw her; he told her every speech she had r uttered to him, trivial or grave; every passing pression of friendship and regard; every word d action that had confirmed his belief that she I not return Theodore's love: and lastly, he told how he loved her himself. And he knew t, he saw not the anguish of the blind girl's art as he continued his recital; she felt as if in r agony all her secret was written on her brow, t he read it not there; she felt as if a knife had idenly been planted in her bosom, and she was rful that he would see her pain; but she found at the writhings of her tortured spirit were led from his eyes; that he read only pity in tears that forced their way, and that he thanked r for that sympathy that seemed to her to be inging the life-blood from her heart. Ashamed practising even such a deception, she strove to dise his impression; she listened with tenderss, and she proffered such advice as she had to re, and it was chiefly an earnest, solemn enaty that he would in all things strive to obey e voice of conscience. After he had left her, e found it difficult to account to herself for the treme anguish it had cost her to hear his avowal love for another. What expectation, what hope d his words destroyed? Had she not often ntemplated such a probability? But reason was useless; she felt and knew that of all past I of pain none ever equalled that which now She sat in silent meditation long after he had her; then as the sun went down, and the night dews began to fall, she rose and found way to her own chamber, and sank upon knees, seeking for peace. And from that when she prayed for Claude, she prayed Venetia too.

# CHAPTER XXXIX.

Slumber is there, but not of rest.

KEBLE.

lours of further trial, such as should arouse ner energies, were now awaiting poor Ruth. ut the third day after Claude's visit, when the I hour of dinner at the farm had arrived, and n prepared to descend from her chamber to her father as she was accustomed to do, she d that he had not returned to the house. was an unusual accident, and as she waited , and still he came not, first a feeling of sur-, and then one of apprehension arose in her 1; at length, in order to satisfy her fears, she atched a labourer to seek him in the fields. r the lapse of half an hour she heard a conin, and she thought a scuffle, in the hall w; she hastened to the top of the stairs, and deagerly to one of the maids to tell her the She was not long unanswered, for a sergirl running wildly up to her, screamed , without in any way preparing her for such

They my poor master! They are bringing in dead! He fell down in the field!"

1

L. III.

Ruth at these horrible addressed to her, sank dow She was long insensible; the girl who had so foo sitting beside her, crying the imprudence.

"Oh, Miss Ruth!" she to see you open your eyes. you—indeed I did: and

Poor Ruth had hardly sufficiently to remember robbed her of them; but her mind the dreadful tidin she started up, wildly excla

"Where have they laid

"Oh! don't take on s tell you he is not dead speak, it is true: and I t they call a stroke."

These words serving to was yet time for action, possession. She inquired summoned, and she found done that in their terror man to the neighbouring to Dinmore to fetch Claubeside her father's bed, supsary proceedings as well as son was speechless, and the his body deprived of the

eyes were open, but he appeared wholly unconscious of all around him.

Claude was fortunately at home when Ruth's messenger arrived; on hearing the man's account of Grierson, he thought that there was little probability that he would live through the day; he went immediately to Mr. Mordaunt to communicate to him what had occurred, and asked him to accompany him to the side of the dving man. They both set out without delay; in the course of their ride Mr. Mordaunt, who had from the day of what might be called his adoption of Claude, believed that some mystery was attached to his birth, and that a knowledge of the circumstances of it was possessed by Grierson, and was also led to believe, from the stern secresy with which he kept it concealed, that it must be of importance, fell to thinking how he could avail himself of the present occurrence to obtain the elucidation he so much desired. He communicated his design, as soon it was formed, without hesitation to Claude. Now Claude generally possessed so great a power of commanding at all times a composure and evenness of manner, and thus veiling entirely from all observers the agitation of the spirit within, that Mr. Mordaunt and Theodore, though both had the most delicate respect for his feelings, would often, in conversation with him, fall with perfect unreserve on subjects which, had they read on his countenance the inmost workings on his heart, they would not



finding himself perhaps on the brink on which he knew that his heart had set.

"Sir," at length began Claude longer desirous to learn anything fortunate man can disclose; he has knowledge he possesses, until now without value. From what I say, y rally conclude that I have recently di which I have never made known will probably feel reproachfully towa I avow that such a supposition would you cannot know how sensibly I necessity for this concealment. A allow myself to say in explanation is learnt nothing of which I can and I have lost all wish to learn most unhappy subject. Believe me you that honour strictly forbids me t to you. Nothing less sacred should

Claude spoke with much emotion, and here he copped short. After a brief pause Mr. Mordaunt, tore engrossed by pity and sorrow to see him tus overcome, than by the perplexity into which is mysterious language threw him, held out his and to Claude, and said:

"My dearest Claude, do not fear that your lence can ever be misinterpreted by me into any ant of confidence on your part towards me. I now you far too well to misconceive your actions, and do not either of you doubt how sincere is the rief I feel that your inquiries should only have an productive of fresh wounds to your spirit. I el most bitterly, my dearest boy, for your disapintment, and for my own. I know not why, it I clung to the hope of better things."

Claude saw that, though without intention, he is leading him completely away from the truth. Was painful to him to practise this deception; I he knew not how to avoid it without tressing on that secresy he had resolved to maining inviolate. He took his proffered hand, and tears sprang to his eyes as he clasped it.

As they approached the farm, Claude rode on a litin advance of Mr. Mordaunt, anxious to see ith. He hastened into the house without stoping to inquire, and ran up stairs to Grierson's in. He found Ruth at a little distance from r father's bed, a little out of sight of it, kneelg on the ground, her lips moving, and her fair, intle face full of the most touching expression of mingled grief and resignation. He silently fell on his knees beside her, and throwing his arm around her, kissed away the tears that were rolling down her pale cheek. "My dearest Ruth," he whispered, "God's will must be done; am I come too late? Is it all over?"

"No," said Ruth, "he still lives, and I think he hears us if we speak. I have wished for you so much. He made a sign once, and half murmured a sound which I think was Roger's name, and I entreat you to lose no time in writing to him: he might be here to-morrow."

As she spoke, she rose, and led Claude to the foot of her father's bed. There he lay; his stern, harsh features rendered literally appalling by the aspect of death that they wore. His eyes were open, but they were fixed, and seemed to discern nothing, and yet he did not appear wholly unconscious of Claude's approach, for when he drew near, an expression of pain passed over the sick man's face, and he almost made an effort to turn away. At perceiving this Claude was inexpressibly shocked, and drew Ruth gently back; she seemed anxiously awaiting his opinion, but he did not speak, for he did not dare to awaken a hope in her heart. He was averse to remaining within Grierson's sight. after the observation he had fancied he had made, so he withdrew to write to Roger the only letter he had ever written to him. Mr. Mordaunt now arrived, and he greeted the sorrowing girl most kindly. Her peculiar sufferings, and her gentle resignation had, from his first knowledge of her, rendered her an object of much interest to him; and whenever he received any tidings of Claude, he had not neglected to comply with the request which his letters never failed to contain, to repeat them to her. But her father had always appeared to regard his visits with displeasure and suspicion, and had even met him in so repulsive a manner as would have discouraged, or offended any one actuated by a less benevolent and truly Christian spirit.

Mr. Mordaunt, at Ruth's request, followed her into Grierson's room, but he now seemed insensible of their approach; and promising not as yet to leave the house. Mr. Mordaunt returned to Claude. The day was nearly spent before medical assistance could be procured, and it was very evident to those who beheld the sufferer, that it would be of little avail when it did arrive. Mr. Mordaunt waited for the arrival of the physician, and leading him immediately to the sick man's chamber, asked his opinion as to the prolongation of life. He shook his head, and replied that he thought he could not exist throughout the night. Mr. Mordaunt deeming his presence quite useless, as Grierson had never spoken since his attack, then returned home; and Claude, after entreating Ruth to seek a few hours of repose, once again took up his station beside a bed of sickness, to watch the fluctuations from life to death, but with emotions though deeply painful, very different from those experienced in

the former fulfilment of the same task. The expression of aversion on the sick man's countenance. which he had been so shocked to see, had now completely passed away, or he could not have remained beside him: it was succeeded by undisturbed stupor. It was past midnight, and Claude was lost in meditation on the mysteries in which his fortune were involved, and from which he was bound not to extricate them. He felt a great curiosity to know in what light Grierson had regarded him, and whether or not he had ever known the real secret of his birth. In the midst of these thoughts, a slight rustling disturbed him, and turning hastily towards the sick man's bed, he saw that his eyes were open, and fixed full upon him with a ghastly stare. He immediately started up and approached him; he saw that he moved his lips, and was striving to speak. His voice was thick and his words scarcely articulate, but Claude bent over him, listening intently; and these few words reached his anxious ear.

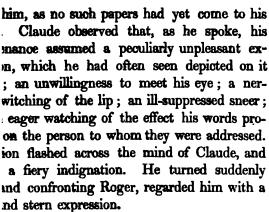
"Claude, forgive me! If I live, I will right you: if I die, right yourself. Ruth, my poor Ruth!"

At this moment the noise of approaching footsteps reached their ears. Claude heard an altercation of voices near the door of the chamber, and hastened to hush it. As soon as he opened the door, he perceived Roger, who had unexpectedly arrived. His voice seemed to be recognized by the dying man; for no sooner did he hear it, than, with a mighty effort, he raised himself in his bed, and uttering his name, fell back and expired! Claude, though in utter hopelessness, summoned he physician, who had passed the night in the rouse, but the spark of life was for ever extinct.

The grief of the unfortunate Ruth could carcely have been more violent had she always experienced the tenderest affection from her father. It was true that, in the midst of all his harshness, t had never been exercised towards her; and if ne had sometimes treated her with unkind coldness, he had never been guilty of violence. She nad, therefore, reason to believe that, in his heart, ne entertained more love for her than for any other iving being. The chief cause of the anguish she elt, proceeded from her entire ignorance of the state of mind in which he had expired; and when Claude repeated to her his last words, in which ner name and his were joined, and which contained e petition for forgiveness, they conveyed more polace to her spirits than any other mode of consolation could have done. Claude bore her away rom the bed of death as soon as she would permit nim to remove her; and after seeing her attended o in every possible manner that could minister to ner comfort, and finding that Roger was still in the chamber where the lifeless clay of his uncle vas lying, he would not intrude on what appeared o be a natural expression of grief; but retiring, ast himself on his bed for the remainder of the

night. When he rose from it he first visited Ruth, and then sought Roger, intending to offer him assistance in all necessary arrangements, and if he found him really afflicted and shocked by the suddenness of the departure of a relative, who had held the place of a parent with regard to him, to spare him all exertion. But he was by no means surprised when he plainly perceived that Roger was already relieved from any such feelings; and the rapacity of the heir, it was soon manifest, could with difficulty be restrained within the bounds of decency.

Claude exerted himself to the utmost in behalf of Ruth, and carefully consulted her interests; it was not for some days that he thought sufficiently of his own, to turn over in his mind the possible meaning of Grierson's last words, and to determine to search among the papers which he had left in order to ascertain whether any disclosure of the secret already in his possession were there. of course, was rather with an anxiety to secure them from the hands of others, than from any desire to have them in his own. He determined to apply to Roger and to Ruth, before he commenced his search. He addressed the former with manly frankness on the subject, anticipating, ere he did so, a sullen and churlish reply; for he knew that he had already excited his displeasure by his strenuous exertions in Ruth's cause. Contrary to his expectation, Roger replied with apparent interest and friendliness, and even declared regret at his inability to



believe that you are playing me false," he ter a brief pause; "nor would this be for st time."

hearing these words, Roger's face assumed by paleness; he clenched his hands convulbut he succeeded in restraining the rage affocated him, and speaking slowly through sed teeth, replied:

ove it, if you can."

ide cast a look of scorn upon him as he and left him. Never in his life before had allowed passion so much to master him; nishment awaited his error. Leaving Roger, the Ruth, and to her he disclosed his doubts tened earnestly; but she was at a loss how nsel him. If these important papers were n the possession of Roger, she saw no means cing him to relinquish them, still less now laude had exasperated him by the reproach

he had uttered; she sighed deeply and was silen for she knew not what to suggest. While the were thus engaged, Claude received a summon from a messenger who arrived from Mr. Mordaunt, bringing him a letter. Claude ran down see him, and recognizing the hand-writing of Lord Llarnarmon hastily tore it open, and read with joy the earnest thanks with which his brother accepted his offer to accompany him to his place of destination. Theodore also informed him of the time fixed for his departure, vrging him to come to himimmediately; but Claude, seeing that the time was so near at hand, was forced on Ruth's account to relinquish the idea of joining him in London, and to content himself with meeting him at Dovor. Claude returned to relate to Ruth the contents of his friend's letter, and telling her that he must immediately communicate them to Mr. Mordaunt also, embraced her affectionately, and bade her adieu, promising that he would not leave the country without seeing her again.

#### CHAPTER XL.

But ah! who can deceive his destiny Or weene by warning to avoyd his fate? That when he sleepes in most security And safest seemes, him soonest doth amate, And findeth dewe effect or soone or late.

SPENSER.

s soon as Lord Llarnarmon arrived at his se in town, he sought the advice of Dr. Armi-Even the short fatigue of the journey had ted him sensibly, and the increasing debility which he was becoming painfully aware, inclined for his mother's sake, more than from any re of life in himself, to lend an ear to the adhe received from the physician. Dr. Armi-, without hesitation, gave him positive injuncs to leave England before the winter, and to that season in some more genial climate; he zested Madeira, but Theodore's thoughts and hes naturally turned at once to joining the mers, and he made choice of Italy. His chief On for this decision was the consolation that it Id be to him in a strange land to place his her near some who were her friends, so that if hing should befal him, she might not find elf altogether desolate. With regard to his

final recovery, he had that deep feeling of a spondency which is among the most fatal syn toms of illness. Immediately after forming t plan, he wrote an account of it to Claude, reve ing to him unreservedly all the motives by whi he was actuated. Though some scruples prevent him from requesting Claude to accompany him, felt not the smallest doubt what his reply to the letter would be. The causes that restrained hi from asking what his heart most desired, we twofold. Knowing that his property was strict entailed with his title, which devolved on a dista cousin, whom some former family feud had who estranged from him, he did not think that if I own life were shortened, he should be able to p vide for Claude in such a manner as to count balance the injury he must do himself, by the sacrifice of his present interests, which such dev tion of his time would call for: and again, he f the cruelty of domesticating him a second tir with Venetia, unless he could find some means effecting their union, which the obscurity Claude's birth rendered quite hopeless.

Lord Llarnarmon, having dispatched his letter threw himself on a sofa, still turning over in a mind every practicable and impracticable way serving his friend, when his ruminations were i terrupted by the entrance of a servant, who i formed him that a person particularly desired to a him, and begged that if he could not admit his then, he would appoint another hour in the could

of the day. Lord Llarnarmon was ignorant who the person might be, and of the nature of his business; but directed him to be shown into his library, and went down there to meet him. The person he found awaiting him, was a young man of a peculiarly unpleasing countenance, shy and sinister in expression; his skin was thickly covered with freekles; his hair red, and of a stunted growth, and his small, keen eyes had a restless, wandering look, not unlike that of a ferret.

Theodore, as he cast a glance on him, had a kind of half conviction that he had seen that face before, though he was quite unable to say when, or where. He felt certain that he had some disagreeable association with it. The gentleman in question seemed disposed to lose no time in proceeding to business.

"My Lord," he began in a voice of sycophancy, combined with ill-disguised insolence, "allow me to inform you that my name is Grierson; a name Probably not unfamiliar to you, in consequence of its connection with a dependent of your Lordship's, called Claude Lermont."

"A friend," interrupted Theodore with severity.

"With your friend, Mr. Lermont, then," repeated the man, rather abashed. "He, I doubt not rou will remember, left my uncle to reside with rour Lordship, and since that time, I have had little or no intercourse with him (for he has but a hort memory for old friends) until about a week ince, when being suddenly informed of the danger-

ous illness of my uncle, I hastened home, and then My uncle died. I found Claude. I was, as I always expected to be, his heir; and in short, my Lord, you owe my present visit to the fact of my having found among my uncle's papers certain deeds and memorials of which it might be well worth your while, or Lermont's, to get possession. Now, my Lord, I am disposed to be very frank with you, and to tell you honestly, that having no interest in them myself, I think I can do no better than dispose of them to the highest bidder. We all know that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush; therefore, was I inclined to come to you first knowing that your promises might be ratified by some present bond, while for the fulfilment of Lermont's I must look to the future; and I trust that the papers which I shall produce are able to bear out the tale they tell, for which, as a bit of a lawyer myself, I-will vouch. Now the next steps necessary to be taken are to make your Lordship aware of their contents, and to hear your decision as to whether you will, or will not make it worth my while to transfer them to you."

Theodore listened to this man's vulgar haranged with an aversion which every word increased; he was resolved not to leave this mystery uninvestigated, and yet felt a repugnance to deal wholly in private with so great a knave. Still he was at a loss whom to admit to confidence on such a subject. The man had excited his interest in the highest degree, and had alarmed him by his equiro-

tal speech. He strove to betray his anxiety as little as possible, and affecting a composure which he was far from feeling, he said:

"If you are come to London entirely on this business, you probably require a speedy answer to your proposals. Call on me this evening, and wing the papers with you."

The man looked displeased, and seeing that Lord larnarmon expected him to depart, said, in a wagher tone than he had yet ventured to use:

"Excuse me, my Lord, if I add that this secret ouches your title, your inheritance, the honour of our family, which I have been told is what men the count their grandfathers think of. I tell you, hat it is in my power to make Claude Lermont a seer of the realm, and you a dependant on his will."

Theodore was thunderstruck at these words; the changed colour, and sank back on his seat:

"Good God!" he murmured, "is this possible?"
"It is more than possible, it is true!" said loger with emphasis; then after a pause he dded: "If you would know how these facts came to my uncle's possession, learn that his brother as the confidential servant of your grandfather."

By this time Theodore had in some measure covered himself, and he said in a low voice:

- "On what terms shall these papers be mine?"
- "Give me a handsome annuity for them," re-
- "Return then, as I told you; let them be theoming. In case I should accept your terms,

it will only be after the strictest examination of them," said Theodore with an air of command which awed Grierson, who had hitherto presumed on his gentleness.

No sooner had he departed than Theodore rang the bell, and ordered his carriage. Entering it, he desired the servants to drive immediately to the Temple. He rolled on through the crowded streets, totally lost to every thing but a consideration of the extraordinary communication just made to him. He of course inferred from Grieron's language that the papers he had found, contained proofs that Claude was the legitimate heir of the hereditary honours of his house. But how this was to be proved he was still ignorant.

He remembered that his father was the second son of Lord Llarnarmon. Had there been any foul play in his succession to his deceased brother? Had there been an unacknowledged heir? The offspring perhaps of some unworthy union, whose very existence had been kept profoundly secret! By whom had this fraud been perpetrated ?—By his father, whose memory was so reverenced by all who had known him, and who was so beloved for his benevolence, virtue, gentle ness, and for having 'borne his faculties so meekly?' Far more probably by his grandfather, of whom he had heard of as the proudest, and most with dictive of men, and whose forbidding countenance he well remembered to have gazed on with aresion, among the portraits that hung at Llarnarmon!

### CONTRITION.

as Claude the child of his uncle, who had rished in early youth, or was he possibly his n brother? At that thought, a gush of tenders for the absent Claude filled his heart. n was the mystery of the passionate, unchanging I unchangeable love that had sprung up in their arts from the day they knew each other; here s the indissoluble link that had bound them Lost in this delicious contemplation, forgot the shock he had experienced; the regret bural on resigning all worldly possessions; the se of shame, that had arisen at the idea of ing stripped of them as an usurper, an imstor, a defrauder of another man's rights. All ese feelings lost their force from the moment at the idea entered his mind that Claude is his brother: an idea that uncorroborated it as yet was, from its first admission acquired strength which he could not resist.

### CHAPTER XLI.

D' ogni cosa che onor non fosse o bene-Non teme Sprezzar qual cosa vil, l'argento e l'oro E tutto quel che quì fa l'uom beato.

BERNARDO TASEO.

LORD LLARNARMON (as we must yet by courtesy term him) having reached the place of his destination, alighted from his carriage, and proceeded immediately to the chambers of Mr. Arthur. This gentleman was a solicitor in much practice, and of a high reputation, no less for integrity than for abilities. But these were not the only reasons why Theodore sought him now. He remembered in him one of his father's oldest and most esteemed friends, and this, added to his character and position, seemed to mark him as peculiarly suited to be his adviser in his present circum-Much to his satisfaction he found him disengaged, and his benevolent countenance expressed the pleasure with which he received his visitor. After some time had passed in general conversation, Theodore said to him :

"I did not come here merely for the pleasure of seeing you, for that is one which I hope to enjoy t my own house. The cause of my intrusion on ours which I know are most precious, is to apply o you for advice in a case of very great, perhaps of the last importance to me; and presuming on hose friendly sentiments which you have always appressed towards my family, I sought you without resitation."

At this opening, Mr. Arthur looked surprised, but with the utmost kindness declared his willingness to serve his young friend, to the utmost of its power. Thus encouraged, Theodore related to him the whole history of his connection with claude up to the present time, and then the expordinary visit which he had that day received. Mr. Arthur listened with interest to the first part of its recital, and the latter he heard with unfeigned succern. As Theodore beheld the expression of the last feeling overcloud his expansive brow, he instened to relieve him from it, and to declare his tell views on the subject.

"I will not affect to say," he began," that I an look forward to this extraordinary revelation without great anxiety, nor that I do not dread hat this discovery may lay bare facts to the discovery of those I revere." Here he haved; then in a firmer voice he continued:

"But all these apprehensions are greatly robbed their power to afflict me, by the fact that I so entely love and approve him who will profit by this scovery. Do not doubt the sincerity with which I sure you, that the predominate feeling of my mind

is thankfulness to Heaven for being the chosen instrument to right a great wrong, if such have indeed been committed. The reasons why I have applied to you are, I think, sufficiently forcible to lead you to forgive the trouble I shall entail on you. In the first place, my inexperience in any legal affairs is so great as to leave me perfectly at the mercy of this knave. I believe him to have entertained an inveterate aversion to Claude from his childhood; he may therefore seek, if I know not how to manage him, to frustrate my proceedings if in his favour: I am also under orders, which for my mother's sake, I dare not disobey, to set out immediately for the continent; and the state of my health is, my dear Sir, to say the best of it, so precarious, that I might find myself unable at a future period to make any exertions, however necessary."

Mr. Arthur was exceedingly touched by the patient fortitude with which his young friend spoke; and taking his hand, reiterated his assurances of his desire to render him every service in his power. The two gentlemen finally agreed that Mr. Arthur should join Lord Llarnarmon at dinner that day, and be present afterwards at his conference with his expected visitor. Theodore then took leave, and on returning home, informed his mother of the guest he had invited. Lady Llarnarmon, much dispirited by her interview with Dr. Armitage, who however had very guardedly expressed his apprehensions, told her son that she was too

indisposed to see any one, even so old a friend, and that she would therefore leave them to a tete-ù-tete. Theodore felt relieved by this arrangement, as he had previously anticipated some embarrassment in accounting to his mother for the business which he should have to transact with Mr. Arthur. Accordingly, after taking leave of her with the greatest affection, for all his tenderness was awakened by the thought that he was probably about to hear what would be an astounding blow to her, he went to receive his friend alone. Mr. Arthur, though a man full of kindly feelings and warm affections, was yet so completely accustomed to lay aside, in periods given to relaxation, all thoughts connected with his serious and important avocations, that during dinner, though unfeignedly interested in the cause that brought him thither, he was able to support an unflagging conversation with animation. His fund of anecdote and information was so varied and inexhaustible, and he knew so well how to draw from its stores whatever was best suited to the occasion, that while the servants were present, and it was necessary to abstain from any allusion to the real business of the evening, his agreeable discourse diverted even the mind of Theodore from the anticipation of it. As soon, however, as all restraint was removed, and they found themselves alone, Mr. Arthur recurred immediately to the subject in question, nor did Theodore shrink from the discussion. He asked Mr. Arthur if he had ever heard any rumours respecting his father's succession to his title, that could afford any corrob testimony to this man's tale; but nothing kind had ever reached Mr. Arthur's ears. Heeling had been that of utter astonishment, his reflections on the subject, after Theodor quitted him, had only increased, and he st vently hoped that no truth would be found statement. The appointed hour had scarce rived when Grierson was there, and was, a viously, introduced into Lord Llarnarmon's lin which he was joined by the two gentl Theodore immediately approached Grierson said:

"I need not ask you, Sir, whether you with you the papers of which you have spol would at once examine them."

Grierson cast an uneasy glance at the unk for stranger, and seemed rather awed I dignity of his countenance, and the acute petion of his dark eye; he approached the table shuffling sort of manner, drew forth his p book, and opening it, took from it several properties that the first which he laid before Lord Llarm was a written form of an agreement to pay on the transfer of certain papers specified that an annuity of five hundred pounds a This Mr. Arthur, with a gesture of angreempt, hastily threw aside, and Grierson a suddenly to awake to the conviction that the was no longer so completely in his own has it might have been, had he only met with

dore. The next papers Grierson produced were a copy of the agreement made between the late Lord Llarnarmon and his uncle, on the reception of Claude into his house (exactly similar to the one in Claude's possession); and also several letters between the two brothers, written while the elder one was in Lord Llarnarmon's service, relating to this transaction, previously to its conclusion, and again subsequently to it, and the detailed account of the whole affair which was only to be made use of after Lord Llarnarmon's death. These documents Mr. Arthur scrutinized with a searching glance from which it seemed impossible to conceal anything, and equally vain to attempt either to disguise or misrepresent the most trifling circumstance. To his sorrow he was quickly convinced that these papers contained quite sufficient testimony to annihilate in any honest mind, all belief that his friend's claims to the possessions he had hitherto deemed his, were tenable. Taking Theodore aside, he candidly told him that he did not think that he could, in common prudence, refuse to accede to Grierson's demand, and on any terms advised him to make himself master of these papers. "I believe," he continued, "that I clearly understood you to entertain a noble purpose of obeying without hesitation the decree of justice, and with such a determination, it will redound far more plainly to your honour, to execute them yourself than to leave them in the hands of this mean-spirited, sordid knave. You declare VOL. III.

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that you have perfect and well-grounded confidence in your brother. What do you imagine that his conduct would be, if these papers were offered to him?"

"He would purchase them for the purpose a destroying them, or at least he would never available himself of them during my life. But this man i his enemy; and as he could not believe any human being capable of neglecting, or refusing to profit by such an advantage, I feel sure that he never would place what he so highly esteems in the hands of one he hates."

"In that case," said Mr. Arthur musingly, "to what use could be turn them, supposing that you refuse to close with his terms?"

"Why as he would give no credit to my belief that Claude would act in a manner so inconceivable to himself, he would continue to hold out threat (which he would consider formidable) in order to extract perpetually fresh sums of money from each."

"True," replied Mr. Arthur, "I see that you view of the subject coincides perfectly with mine We must undoubtedly have these papers, and advise you to take his first offer, or he will infallibly rise in his demands."

Accordingly they rejoined the man, and bidding him to reproduce the paper which he had first offered to their notice, Theodore signed it, an Grierson quitted them full of regret and self-re proach for not having demanded a reward muc onsiderable than that which he had obtained little difficulty.

dore no sooner received the important than he gave them up to Mr. Arthur, "I have promised my mother that I will ngland in three days. I place this business in your hands; you shall pay over to Grierstipulated sum, and I wish you to arrange ple evidence in such a manner that the title operty may be transferred to the rightful thout difficulty or delay, whenever it shall be h to do so."

he mention of his mother's name, Theodore's dtered for the first time, and he betraved motion. Mr. Arthur, who really dreaded s health would be affected by the agitation 30 singular an affair could not fail to cause nd willing to devote his best energies to the of one who conducted himself so nobly, whom he was linked by former ties of friendtrongly urged him on no account to delay arture from England, and agreed to write 1 a constant detail of all his proceedings. then separated for the night; but though ore enjoyed the testimony of a good con-, his sleep could not but be disturbed by the ousy thoughts that occupied his mind. course no longer any scruples with regard aining Claude, his brother, near him, nor affection for Miss Dormer now appear so is as to render it blameable in him to place them again together. A revelation of the really existing circumstances to Mr. Dormer, would at any time smooth the difficulties in their way to happiness; and the only cause of unmitigated pain which continued to harass Theodore's mind, was the contemplation of the grief this discovery could not fail to occasion his mother. Though he strove, for the love he bore her, to scan her faults with a gentle eye, yet he knew her character well. He knew its pride and its ambition; the strength and the weakness of it; and he knew how all her feelings centered in himself.

He dwelt with horror on the wound which he was about to inflict. The thought of that early doom which of late he had often contemplated with no unpleasing melancholy, recurred to him at this moment; if it were to be the will of Heaven to deprive her ere long of her only child, he deemed that the loss of rank, fortune, honour, would scarcely at such a moment be felt, lost in this 'consummate woe.' For her sake, he was powerfully tempted to delay the disclosure, until that terrible hour should arrive.

## CHAPTER XLII.

How, in a realm so distant, should you know From what deep source my ceaseless sorrows flow?

Mr. Dormer and his daughter having once left England, sought to reach Naples in the most expeditious mode possible. The weather was still so sultry, though the month of October, (with all the gorgeous beauties of the vintage), had arrived, that they found Lady Esther Dormer quite unwilling to relinquish as yet the charms of the delightful villa at Castellamare, in which she had spent the summer. Her husband and her child accordingly joined her there; and the joy that she and Venetia experienced on meeting, proved to them that they never knew how fondly they loved each other until they had submitted to the test of separation.

It was quite impossible that Venetia should return to dwell beneath the eye of a most affectionate mother, without the deep dejection of her spirits becoming speedily evident; without such an observer quickly discovering that

A canker worm had stolen Into the bud!

and a grievous change come over her child. To

perceive this, filled Lady Esther with grief; no change could have been acceptable in one she loved so much, and deemed so lovely; but to behold a change from vivacity to dejection, from mirth to sorrow, smiles changed into tears, and peace into trouble, was to behold one that filled her soul with anguish! She was averse to asking the confidence of her child; if her suspicions were founded in truth, and not the mere creations of fancy, she felt assured that Venetia could not long withhold from her any real feeling of her heart. She dreaded too by inquiries to give her daughter's cause of sorrow (if such there were) an importance, a reality of existence which she knew can be imparted to thoughts, before but half permitted or indulged, by the simple act of expressing them in words; for from the time they have been audibly breathed to any human ear, they attain a power unexerted and unknown before.

But though Lady Esther was resolved not to speak as yet on the subject, it entirely engrossed her mind. She not unnaturally fell upon the thought, that the affection of her young daughter had been won by Lord Llarnarmon, who was described by Mr. Dormer and by Venetia, as a most interesting and amiable sufferer; and knowing the melancholy presentiment of the near approach of his death entertained by her husband, she believed that she had solved the mystery of Venetia's grief, and her heart bled for her child. Nor did she hope to see tears flowing from such a source

speedily dried up. Such a grief as this she knew could be tempered only by the hand that dispensed Full of anxiety, she sought to elicit from Mr. Dormer whether her fears had any foundation in his eyes. He, as we have already said, had ceased to entertain this apprehension; but Lady Esther could not derive entire satisfaction from his conviction. She was persuaded that a cause of distress existed, which was at present concealed from them both. Without revealing to him this suspicion, she continued to wait in silent expectation of spontaneous confidence on the part of Venetia. Poor Venetia, meantime, felt the restriction she strove to impose on herself from any open evidence of grief, almost insupportable. She had since her return shared her mother's apartment; so that not even night brought solitude, nor permitted her to mourn unrestrainedly. She feared that her mother's ear would catch the stifled sobs and longdrawn sighs, that she sought in vain to repress. At first, the delight of being again with her had. for awhile banished the remembrances of the past, and she felt happy in the enjoyment of the pre-But this rest could not last long; and whenever the utter fruitlessness of her regrets forced itself upon her consideration, this thought only caused her fresh anguish.

On the evening that followed Lady Esther's first conversation with her father, Venetia felt more than usually overcome by despondency. It was one of those delicious evenings which I have never

known elsewhere than in the bel regno di Napoli. The terrace in which Venetia sat commanded a view of that most beautiful bay. Vesuvius lay stretched before her in all its purple glory; its long, gracefully-curling column of smoke ascending high, and then, as it were, sweeping across the sky as far as the sight could reach; the base of it reflecting a lurid glow from the unseen fires devouring the mountain's bosom. The rays of the setting sun were reflected in all their splendour, on earth, sky, and ocean.

The distant Abruzzi, the fairy Capri, and Naples, bella Napoli, were all before her, each with its own peculiar loveliness; and around the trellis-work against which she leant, hung the clustering vines, laden with fruit in every stage of beauty; the foliage here and there betraying the touch of autumn; wearing a scarlet dye, vivid and gorgeous, but auguring decay! Such was the scene on which she looked, and yet she seemed to look unheedingly; and as she gazed on that tideless ocean, she thought of the dull calm that reigns where there is no hope; her eyes filled slowly with tears that fell silently down unobserved by herself, but not by her mother, who stood beside her.

"Venetia," she said, "my child!—if you must weep, let it be on my bosom!" and she drew her towards her, meeting no resistance, and folded her in her arms.

Still Venetia spoke not; at length raising

herself suddenly from her mother's neck, she wiped away every tear that remained on her cheek; and seating herself beside her mother, began, not uncalmly, to speak—and of what? Of the past, but not of Claude! And yet she felt strangely tempted to approach this subject—to approach it very nearly, but not quite to enter upon it.

To her mother's astonishment she mentioned her cousin with even less of hope than her father had expressed; and though she spoke in accents of tender affection and of deep regret, still, from that moment, Lady Esther knew that Venetia had not given her heart to Theodore.

After a time Venetia sank again into silence; and their conversation seemed likely to terminate without giving Lady Esther any further insight into the cause of her anxiety, when she chanced to mention Lady Theodora. Venetia could not refrain from expatiating on the surprise and regret which her further knowledge of her character had excited in her. In the course of her remarks she alluded to her conduct towards the friend of her son; and the alteration in her countenance as she mentioned his name, even thus casually, was immediately perceptible to her mother, and she felt that it was so. She stopped short, and then in an altered voice she began again to speak; and now she went back even to the day when she first reached Llarnarmon. She told how the constant theme of her cousin's conversation was his humble.

low-bern friend; how her interest was awake his discourse, and was shared by Lady Llarna how his coming was awaited with som more than curiosity; and then he came, an said how he had seemed to her father and to self,

> Complete in feature and in mind, With all good grace to grace a gentleman.

But here she passed quickly on, to tell he began to suspect Lady Llarnarmon of jealous how she strove to repel such a thought, unt attempt to separate Claude from her son p end to all doubt; and then she could no refrain from expressing her generous indigr. Then she spoke of Theodore's long and t illness, the struggle between life and death Claude's devotion could not pass unnoticed. told also of his sudden departure, of the laterview she had ever had with him, and of dore's words to her on the following day. now her tale was ended!

Her mother knew all that could be conve words, and felt how much must necessarily unsaid, not to be expressed, but not therefo real, no less never to be forgotten nor recalled the facts and occurrences which she had her



## CHAPTER XLIII.

Ma pur combatto con me stessa, e sento In me ragione or vincitrice, or vinta; Ahi! può tanto il mio duol, s' io nol consento? FILICAJA.

IT was impossible for Mr. Dormer to speak much of Theodore without mentioning Claude; and indeed he did not fail to communicate to Lady Esther the high opinion he had conceived of him, and the interest he had inspired by his romantic devotion to his friend. Such generosity as Mr. Dormer described, Lady Esther felt must have excited all Venetia's sympathy; it was impossible that she should have withheld it from so congenial a nature. She trembled when she became aware of the danger to which her daughter had been exposed; and when she reflected on the thoughtless want of caution that had always marked Mr. Dormer's character, she blamed herself for not having entreated him, even more earnestly than she had done, to watch over her child, and to guard her from perils which she forgot that only a mother's eye could have detected. Her thoughts dwelled incessantly on all that Venetia had confided to her; she was anxious to discover the extent of the mischief done, and bent on considering how best to repair

it. She knew well the truth of the poet's words:

What deep wounds ever heal without a scar? The heart's bleed longest, and but heal to wear That which disfigures it;

but she could not endure to think that this sad truth should be realized in Venetia, nor to believe that her gentle spirit had, in such early youth, received a shock from which it would rise no more the free, and buoyant, and joyous thing it had been!

The morning after the conversation to which we alluded, Venetia and her mother were again alone together; the one appeared to be occupied on a drawing, and the other reclining on a sofa, addressed her from time to time. Lady Esther saw that Venetia could not distract her mind from the recollection of their last conversation, and vet seemed to dread any fresh allusion to it. therefore appeared insensible of her embarrassment, and continued their conversation in a careless tone; at length having occasion to rise, to seek some trifle she needed, she approached Venetia to observe her progress. As she drew near, Venetia bent her head over her drawing; a hot tear fell from her eye, and it fell upon an angel's face, and sullied its beauty for ever. And Lady Esther, as she saw the effect of this one tear, inwardly prayed that the first sorrow that her child had known, might not for ever mar the brightness of her life, nor destroy all the fair visions of hope she had permitted herself to indulge with regard to her. She bent over her and kissed her forehead; then turning sadly away, returned to her former position. Venetia could not endure to behold her mother suffering with her, and hastily following her, cast herself upon a low seat beside her, and unable to speak, buried her face in her mother's lap, and burst into tears.

"My child!" said Lady Esther, tenderly clasping the weeping girl to her bosom, and holding her there till she was more calm; then in a low, gentle voice, she went on: "Remember, my child, be your sorrow what it may, that there is One to whom it is known. Remember this, and pray. Though time and space may separate you from your most beloved friends; though discretion, or peculiar, or unforeseen circumstances may force you to keep silent and hidden from them, the joy or bitterness of your heart; though misunderstandings may even estrange you from them, while both in reality be unchanged, there is still One who cannot be separated from you, who cannot be kept in ignorance of anything that you feel or suffer, who cannot misunderstand or misinterpret you; who ever listeneth to the sighings and rejoicings of your spirit; who ever seeth and pitieth your necessities! Many a friend on earth who would die to serve you (and you have such friends, Venetia), may have their best endeavours defeated by the malice of enemies, or by any of the most trifling accidents, yet when He wills to acquiesce in

your desires, no other power of the universe, or alone, can prevail to thwart His purpose, deprive you of any good which He designs f You cannot suffer, whatever be the visible ment employed, but because He wills it. W my child, strive to dwell much on this thou

"I will, mother, I will," replied Venetia in troubled voice. "I do dwell upon such th I think that I can sa long and often. I am satisfied, best pleased that God's will be done! But this resignation of my ov does not give me cheerfulness. I see tha the design of Heaven to try me in a w makes me miserable, and therefore I believe it is best for me to live in misery on eart this belief doth not incite me to say that I : miserable, but only to say, in sincerity. I 'Let thy servant be so, and remain so, oh ( it seem good in thy sight!' Tell me, mother, am I deceiving myself in deemin resignation."

Lady Esther was touched to the quick sorrows of her child; but her tender feeling inclined her to weak indulgence; she con the real interests of her child; all her movent desires for her were for eternity, not fo She deliberated awhile before she answered quiry, and then she replied:

"No, dearest, I do not think that what yo said is reprehensible, but it has suggested the idea that the caution I am about to gi

is at this moment very necessary. You say that you are denied your heart's desires, and are therefore miserable; but that you are humbly content to be so. Now I say to you, do not dwell on those things which you are forced to resign; do not suffer yourself to expatiate on happiness which, my own Venetia, has never been anything but coniectural; you never have possessed what you sigh for; perhaps if you had, you might have found disappointment. You shake your head. I know that this suggestion, instead of proving at this moment consolatory, is wounding to you, and you think me cruel for giving it utterance. Think not so, my child; you will feel the truth of what I say when an excited imagination cools enough to allow you to reflect upon it. Enough: I will dwell no longer on this; but, believe me, I tremble at the temptation to which you will be exposed, if you suffer your fancy to picture to you, in its vivid and unreal colouring, all the delights which at the same time you know cannot be yours. You will too late find the difficulty, perhaps the impossibility, of maintaining the measure of resignation which you now possess. Strive to obtain the mastery over your mind, and the power of rejecting or admitting such thoughts as seek for entrance."

"Oh! mother, mother," said Venetia, bursting into tears; "this it is that I find so impossible. It is in vain that I strive, that I wrestle with my feelings. The same thoughts are ever present, or if expelled, it is for a time so brief! Others seem like a

dream, and these alone, reality. Whether wake, or whether I sleep, whether it is the night or the day, memory and fancy are equally bus When I speak to others, it seems as though h voice answered me. My reflections are all shape as if so many appeals to him. I can only thir as if to carry on an imaginary conversation wil him. If I read, I reflect on what his remarks wou be on every passage that pleases me. occupations it fails not to be the same. mother, it is the similarity, the sympathy, tl unity of thought, feeling, taste, that reigns betwee us. that has rendered him, even in this short tim so indispensable a companion to me, and leav me without him, miserable as you see!" § saying, she buried her face in her mother's la unable to restrain, or to modify this expression her feelings, and equally unable to meet even h mother's eye after this avowal of them.

Lady Esther mingled her tears with those her child, but she did not urge any further counc for she knew that she could say nothing but wh would seem to

. . . . Lack some gentleness And time to speak it in.



## CHAPTER XLIV.

Gran maestra è di noi l'esperienza; Ella ci guidi in questa bassa riva; Madre di veritate e di prudenza.

SALVATOR ROSA.

Ainsi que mes beaux jours mes chagrins sont passés.
BOILEAU.

MR. DORMER left Castellamare in order to seek at Naples an apartment for the ensuing winter. On arriving there he met with some English gentlemen who persuaded him to accompany them to Ischia, where they intended spending a week or two. In his absence. Venetia felt herself called upon to assume a cheerfulness that she did not feel. While Lady Esther, considering that the present extreme retirement of their life was but too well calculated to foster despondency, tried to think on some means of turning Venetia's thoughts away from herself, and employing them on some subject, possessing an interest foreign to her usual pursuits. She knew well how much the value of sympathy is enhanced, when we know that it comes from one who has experienced similar sorrows; and though on the whole her lot in life had been a happy one, and the greatest misfortune she had ever experienced had been to physical sufferings which she had so long endum still she felt that her past life comprised scenes sufficient interest, and even of sufficient similar to render a recital of them likely to prove benefit to her daughter, and at least to afford her m food for a time.

She knew also that confidence begets condence, and felt that another link would be added to the chain of affection that bound them, when should no longer have a secret unknown to child. She had always placed Venetia, even for her childhood, on the equality of a friend. She inculcated what she most wished her to be chiefly by example; she had never attempted infuse fortitude into her young breast by appear to think lightly of her sorrows, even though the sprang from trifling causes; on the contrary, always evinced the most tender sympathy in pains and in her pleasures.

Lady Esther was one of those mothers who that 'Les mères ne sont pas chargées de f sentir à leurs enfans les rudesses de la vie; cer dant, leur mission est de les y préparer.'\*

Impelled by these reflections, she one ever sought Venetia, and proposed a drive, that I might enjoy the balmy sea breeze that was blow After they had set out, she tried to turn the con sation towards the subject on which she mean speak. Her first words were an inquiry who

\* Madame Guizot.



Venetia had seen her old friend, Lady Cecilia Loring, frequently when in England, and after listening to her reply, she added thoughtfully, as if musing on the past:

"Lady Cecilia, by complying with my wishes with regard to what would seem a very trifle, once most materially influenced the whole course of my future life." Venetia's countenance expressed some interest at these words, and her mother pleased to see that it did so, continued: "Before I explain words which I see have excited your curiosity, I ought to go further back in my life, and then, my child, I think you will see with me, that the indulgence or the suppression of sentiments that may naturally spring up in our hearts, must be regulated by the peculiar relative duties annexed to our situation, though in themselves they may appear to us not only exempt from blame, but sven commendable."

Venetia felt her mother's allusion, and turned her head away; perhaps at the moment she felt impatient, but if so, it was but for a moment. She knew that a parent has a right to counsel, and she remembered how gently counsel ever came from the lips of her mother; she therefore willingly prepared to listen, and Lady Esther thus began:

"My youth was not a happy one, Venetia, for it was darkened by the loss of both my parents. This heavy misfortune, and the circumstance of my young brother being, as it were, bequeathed to me, greatly increased my natural seriousness of

mind. The weakness of Everard's health was a constant source of solicitude; while the difference in our age of two or three years, and the more than common desolateness of our situation, gave to my feelings towards him an almost maternal character. In all his sicknesses I watched beside him with a fondness and assiduity equal perhaps to any that a mother could have shown. To such a course of life, ill-suited to the dawn of youth, either in mind or body, much of my subsequent debility and suffering is probably owing. The anxiety I felt, and the thought and consideration exacted from me, were quite beyond my years. We were taken to the home of an uncle, the only near relative we possessed. He was also our guardian. Here we were without any companions of our own age. Our cousin Annabella, who was many years my senior, was already married to a General Leslie. Every faculty of my uncle's mind had long been engrossed by ambitious projects, and his wish was that my brother might tread the same thorny paths, and toil like him for the only prizes he thought worth obtaining. Perceiving that the endowments of mind possessed by Everard were great, and anticipating that promised excellence which he did not live to display, his first desire was to afford him all the advantages of the most careful education. At this time his party being out of place and himself without employment, my uncle removed to his estates in the north, and warning me of the totally secluded life which

he should lead, offered to place me with his daughter during the time of his residence there. The idea of separation was one that was quite intelerable to Everard and to me, and without a moment's hesitation this offer was declined. As my brother's health did not allow him to enter upon the ordinary routine of a public education, my make attached to his suite, as Everard's preceptor, a young man whose abilities and integrity he held in the highest esteem, and most deservedly he did to. If ever I have known a man whom powers of mind and of imagination, whom refinement of aste, and capacity, and acquirements, allied to the choir that cannot die,' it was Sydney Spencer."

Lady Esther spoke with enthusiasm, and she received that Venetia began to listen with interest.

"My brother was now sixteen, and Mr. Spenzer, I suppose, at least three-and-twenty, for he ad quitted the university when he came to is. You cannot imagine anything more remote and secluded than was our residence in Cumberand. The only civilized companions that the place afforded to Sydney, were my brother and myself, who soon became almost equally his pupils. My bondness for Everard had always led me to share the utmost in his occupations, and it was but natural that I should continue to do so when they necessary as they did under Sydney's tuition, far nore congenial to my taste than they had ever neen before, and when I was destitute of any other neans of occupying my time agreeably. Our minds

became wholly engrossed by the new regions thought and information now opened to us. progress we made, filled us with the most live pleasure. Our ambition was awakened, and in: our pictures of the greatness to be acquired Everard, we never failed to represent him as t future patron of his beloved preceptor. happy days were not to last long," said La Esther with a sigh. "My cousin came to see 1 and it was her coming only that revealed in o present circumstances any latent cause for alar any danger to Sydney, or to me. My cousin w a woman of much penetration and worldly w dom, and her experienced eye quickly detect symptoms unobserved by my uncle.

"Though the reserve and abstraction pecul to Sydney usually exempted him from observation I suppose he felt the impossibility of veiling secret feelings from Annabella's scrutiny: for fr the day she came, I certainly saw a change him. Mysterious to me was the origin of t cloud that passed over, and obscured our hithe serene sky; and to behold one whom I regard with deferential affection, thus unaccountably s dened, of course excited compassion and uneasine While I was in ignorance as to the cause of I mentioned the observation which I had me with pain, to my brother. A sudden change his ingenuous countenance told me that he not share my perplexity; my curiosity was awa ened, and after a few interrogations. I obtain from him an acknowledgment, though he said he feared that he did wrong in telling me, that part of a conversation between my uncle and cousin had unintentionally reached his ears, in which the expressions used by Annabella had impressed him with the idea that she was taxing Sydney with cherishing a presumptuous love for me, and reproaching my uncle with madness and imprudence, in permitting our intimacy to continue.

"My mind was so greatly agitated by the sudden intrusion of such an idea, that I quitted my brother abruptly, and strove in solitude to arrange my thoughts, regain my composure, and deliberate on my proceedings. I was chiefly occupied by the contemplation of the utter ruin of Sydney's prospects, that would follow such a discovery. Why was he thus the object of suspicion? I well knew and could openly declare that never had he breathed to me a sentiment that could have been displeasing to his patron, that there had been no breach of confidence, no double dealing in him.

"Supposing him unhappy enough to cherish a hopeless passion, if a sense of duty had prevented all betrayal of its existence, was it now to be visited on him as a crime? Did not justice loudly forbid such a proceeding?

"I confess that a feeling of tenderness at the contemplation of all the happiness that the love of such a man was capable of conferring, for a moment overpowered, and almost disarmed me. Must I reject a gift of so much value? Praying for

strength, I repelled this thought, and bid it return no more. The consideration that steeled my heart against the admission of any soft emotion, was not cold or merely prudential; it was the remembrance that Sydney's honour, his dearest possession, dearer surely to such a heart than love or life, was now at stake. If I betrayed any weakness, how could he escape the imputation of treachery?

" After some hours of painful deliberation, I left my chamber, having decided on the course of action which I intended to pursue. I found Sydney and Everard engaged together; the latter cast a timid glance on me, trying to read the effect produced by his rash communication. I only paused to ask where my cousin was, and then passed on to the garden, to seek her in the path which they told me she had taken. Entering into conversation with her, I led to the subject of her departure, and told her at length, not without much hesitation, that I was beginning to repent my hasty refusal of my uncle's offer to allow me to pay a visit to her; that I felt my spirits suffer in my present abode; that Everard's health was now sufficiently good to allow me to leave him without apprehension, for the few remaining months that my uncle designed to stay in Cumberland; and that I wished to throw myself on her mercy, and to ask her to take me back with her to London. I could not speak with my usual composure, but she very probably attributed my agitation to shyness in making such a request, and to a slight sense of shame in acknowledging the insufficiency of my present tranquil life for my happiness, and the capricious change in my inclinations. She cordially listened to my proposal, and I have no doubt was well satisfied to receive this testimony of indifference, and to be saved from further investigation into an affair of difficulty and delicacy. She graciously promised to acquaint my uncle with my wish, and readily assured me of his consent; nor need I tell you that it was granted.

"There was still a very painful part of my task to be accomplished. I had to tell Everard that I was going to leave him, and not only that I had consented to, but had proposed our separation; and it was our first!

"He must learn this from me, not from others; and I hoped that, young as he was, I might yet be understood, and forgiven. I accordingly sought him in his chamber when he retired to rest, and was received with an affectionate embrace, for he had spent the hours that had elapsed since our last conversation, in self-reproach for having caused me pain. I said to him while I hung upon his neck:

"'Everard, dearest Everard! I have asked Annabella to take me away with her; I am going to leave you. Can you forgive me?'

"He made no answer, but only pressed me more closely to his breast. I felt that I was forgiven.

"The short time that remained before my couvol. III.

sin's departure was fully occupied by the preparations I had to make in order to accompany her; nor was I sorry to have my mind employed, and to be forced to absent myself from the society of Everard and his tutor. Sometimes the thought of abandoning that brother whom I had never quitted for a week together since the death of our parents, made me stop short in whatever I was doing, and shed a flood of tears. I even felt tempted to go to Sydney, and to implore of him to do more than fill my place, but reason forbade me to seek this dangerous interview, which might have frustrated all the measures prudence had dictated. Only one day elapsed between my proposition, and its accomplishment. The knowledge of my intention made no visible change in Sydney's demeanour, at least not after I met him again. How he received the first communication of it I knew not; there was a settled gloom on his countenance, but that it had worn for many days. That evening, when I bid him good night, we were standing a little apart from the rest, and he said hastily in a low voice:

"'I will bid you farewell, Lady Esther, for I will not join your party to-morrow morning; the presence of a stranger would not be acceptable.'

"I held out my hand to him as he said these words, and I could not refrain from exclaiming, with eyes full of tears:

"'Oh, Mr. Spencer, do not forget when I am gone, that Everard has never been without me before!' "The moment these words had passed my lips, I regretted that I had given utterance to them, for though he did not speak, I saw on his countenance the anguish I had caused him. I hastily withdrew my hand, and followed Annabella from the room. I did not see him again, though he remained with my brother till he went to the University.

"Having accompanied Annabella to town, she at once introduced me into the great world, which I had little real desire to enter. In the whirl of dissipation that followed, I lost any abiding remembrance of the past. Not that it was without an effect on my character. I perceived that I was considered by many, cold-hearted, devoid of sensibility, and destitute of the agreeable vivacity and universal complacency for which my cousin was remarkable. But when I turned away with repugnance from many admirers, I usually found, on striving to read the inward sentiments of my heart (which I had rarely time to attempt), that the secret cause of my aversion was that they in no one respect resembled Sydney.

"I think, dear Venetia, that this was the most unhappy period of my life. I had lost the companionship of my brother, and of that friend whose society had afforded us such rational pleasure: and there was now no one near me who had any sympathy in my feelings, any interest in my pursuits; who either considered my opinions, or assisted me in forming them. Every day I grew to

like my cousin less, and to discover more how worldly-minded, how ambitious, and mercenary she was. When my uncle joine began to fear her, for I saw that she we directress of his conduct towards me. As came fully sensible how discordant to my were the principles that ruled the mind actions of my relatives, a vague terror crep me, from an impression that I should not be to resist their power, and that against my should become the helpless victim of their ar proceedings. I felt so fettered, so solitary my heart sickened, and my spirits drooped.

"Can you not imagine how reviving it me, what a well-spring of happiness, sudde meet with one who discovered all that was p so secretly in my heart, and by discovering, 1 that he understood my feelings, and tenderly passionated the dejection they occasioned? was the pleasure I received from the acquain I now formed with Mr. Dormer, who was a the most frequent, and apparently most acce visitors at General Leslie's house. person, the brilliancy of his conversation, as versatility of his talents rendered him the society, while to me his powers of fascination enhanced by the perception that they were al ploved for the purpose of winning me from ness, and of obtaining the meed of my approl

"Every day I became more convinced ( depth and sincerity of the affection he pro

for me. The advantages that an alliance with him possessed were sufficient to secure the favour of my uncle and of my cousin; for though slenderly endowed with fortune, he was highly born, and the nephew of a peer, who had arrived at so mature an age, that neither the world nor his heir any longer contemplated the possibility of his future marriage. My uncle desired that our union should not take place until our return into the country. Our daily intercourse strengthened our mutual liking, but in spite of my authorised belief that all this was consonant to the wishes of my guardian and my cousin, I thought that before long I began to perceive symptoms of discontent and dissatisfaction in both of them, and a coolness of manner towards Mr. Dormer, which struck me as a strange contrast to the peculiar graciousness of their behaviour to him, during the early part of my acquaintance.

"I have very little suspicion. I do not think that in my life I have ever detected a trick unless it really stared me in the face; and here I was quite at a loss. In a short time the mystery was to be solved. My uncle summoned me to him. I confess I had a great horror of such a summons. Never did anything excite greater amazement in me, than did the tendency of his present discourse. He informed me, not harshly, but with an assumption of authority that was intended to awe me into silence, that circumstances had arisen which made him fear that the union between myself and Mr. Dormer could never be

concluded. The warm interest which he took in my welfare, an interest which his double character of relative and guardian made it his duty to feel, and which was increased by the gentle docility and unvarying obedience he had hitherto seen in me, forced him, he said, to pause at least, before he gave any further sanction to our engagement.

"I was so amazed, so stunned when I heard this declaration that he was able to leave me, and to escape, before I could sufficiently collect my wandering senses to inquire into the real meaning of such language. His parting words reached my ears; they seemed to refer me to my cousin, but I was determined not to see her, nor to consult with her, nor even to hear her if she sought me; so convinced was I that they were dealing falsely

with me, though how I knew not.

" I left my uncle's library, regretting that I must of necessity pass through the drawing-room to reach my own apartment, and fearing to meet Annabella there. But how slight, how casual an incident may affect our whole fate! To this very circumstance I owed it that their whole plan was laid bare to my view, and by the timely information thus afforded, was my future conduct regulated. I found the room empty, and as I passed hastily through it, the draught of air blew a newspaper from the table into my way. As I stooped to pick it up again, the name of Dormer's uncle caught my eye, and I paused to read this paragraph:

"'Marriage in High Life.—On the 17th of the present month, it is fixed for Viscount Vaunersleigh to lead to the altar the beautiful and accomplished Miss Houseman,' &c. &c.

"The veil fell from my eyes. Frank Dormer was no longer the bon parti he had been; no longer worthy of consideration in the eyes of my ambitious uncle, or my still more worldly cousin.

"My indignation was indeed excited, and a spirit aroused within me which I knew not before to be inherent in my nature. I flew for refuge to my own chamber, and securing the door, refused admission to Annabella, under the plea of a violent headache; and certainly this was not a false one. length I formed a plan which seemed to promise well. I now remembered a circumstance which had occurred the preceding day, and which at the time had given me displeasure. My friend, Lady Cecilia Loring, had sent me an invitation to go with her to the Opera, which my cousin, while I was absent on a ride, had declined without consulting me, on the plea that I was engaged with her to a large dinner. Mr. Dormer had expressed great vexation at this refusal, and I had been almost on the point of recalling it, particularly as I fancied that I perceived an ill-concealed exultation in Annabella's manner. This idea induced me. the moment that I heard the roll of Annabella's carriage from the door, to dispatch a note by my own maid to Lady Cecilia, telling her that I had changed my mind, and that though a trifling

head-ache had indisposed r at — House, I would wi to the Opera. I wrote ea to write jokingly, and awaite of impatience. In half an h with the following lines:

"'My dear, capricious cl dulge you for once. To tell

longing to see you!'

"This mysterious intima anxious desire to ascertain if concerning my affairs beyo rather guessed, myself; and to have been the friend of to effect our union, I almost all reserve with her, and co my suspicions, to place myse But such a course would he credit upon my family, and of a frank and ard all her fondness for me, she for Annabella, who watched her with jealous dread. I flew down stairs with a as I sprang into the carria with a warm, affectionate ki I could not breathe. We bo as we drove along the ligh in upon me, and I met Ceci upon my face with anxious have seen the tears trickling

said nothing; but as the light passed away, she silently took my hand, and held it in her's till the carriage stopped.

The Opera had commenced, and scarcely were we seated before Cecilia whispered to me, "I see Mr. Dormer in his usual seat." I turned my head hastily and perceived him, but he did not seem to think of looking in our direction, for he could not suppose that I should be there. For the remainder of the act how anxiously I watched him! I was seized with an agony of terror, lest he should depart without ever seeing us. I could have implored Cecilia to send for him; but timidity restrained me, and prevented any outward sign of the anguish I suffered, being visible. Indeed I was afterwards told that the state of feverish excitement in which in reality I was, imparted to me on that evening a vivacity and a brilliancy quite foreign to myself, that lent me a new and unlooked for charm. At last he turned his head towards our box. I was certain that he saw us; and in another moment he left the pit. Oh! how my heart throbbed! The door opened, and he entered; he eagerly approached, and inquired how, and why I had changed my intention. I saw that his countenance was clouded, and in his manner was an embarrassment very unusual to him.

"Cecilia appeared wholly engrossed by the business of the stage; and summoning up all my courage I determined not to let the opportunity escape, which I had sought with so much pains;

so with as easy an air as I could command, I said to him: 'I must congratulate you upon an approaching, and I should think, rather unlooked for event in your family.'

"' What?' said he changing colour.

- "'Oh! do not affect a mystery. I learnt it today for the first time. I mean your uncle's marriage.'
  - "'Where did you learn it?"

"' Why, only in the paper.'

- "'Do you know,' said Dormer in a low voice, 'that I have called twice to-day at your house in vain. I saw Leslie in the Park, and I am sure that he avoided me. Your cousin passed me there, and she looked the other way. Only you, Esther, are the same."
  - "' Why should I be otherwise?" I replied.
- "'May I even now speak plainly to you?' said he with some impatience.
- "'Oh, Frank!' I exclaimed, 'it was for that very purpose that I came hither. If there be cause for apprehension, must not our fears be the same?'
- "Thanking me with a look of the utmost gratitude, he continued: 'You know that this freak of my uncle's considerably alters my prospects for the future, and I cannot but fear that your uncle will look coldly upon me. What will be your feelings, Esther? The decision is yours. Speak but a word, and you are as free as if you had never seen me.'
- "'I shall never speak a word that will alter our relations to each other, unless I believe that you

desire it, Frank. If you could suspect that my conduct would be any other than this, do not tell me so. Spare me the pain of receiving such a reproach from you.'

- "'Never, never!' replied he, 'I knew that my happiness was secure in your hands. And even let all things be as they are, if you, dearest, can forgive me that it is no longer in my power to promise to place a coronet on that beautiful brow. It was a blessed thought that brought you hither to-night!'
- "Indeed, I felt that it was so! And happily was the rest of the evening spent.
- "When I reached home, I found Annabella in my chamber awaiting me. I saw a terrible storm gathering, and I detained my maid as long as possible in hopes that it would pass over, but in vain; she outstayed her, and the moment the door closed after her, she inquired in a suffocated voice, if I had met Mr. Dormer?
- "'Yes, indeed,' replied I carelessly; and then burst over my devoted head an outpouring of abuse and reproach, my duplicity being the chief theme of this tirade.
- "I never have seen any woman so terribly angry! I did not attempt to pacify her; but summoning up all my courage, I told her that it was only to my uncle and guardian that I was responsible for my actions, and that Mr. Dormer and I had had a mutual explanation, and pledged ourselves to abide by our engagement.

"Seeing that she was de hausted by her violence, she rest with an approving consc I had obeyed the dictates of and effectually secured mys of a public dereliction from esteem and affection for I circumstances in which I ha

"The next morning I sough ed him that I felt that my our family (I added with so own happiness, were far to me to contemplate for a mo annulling my openly ackir with Mr. Dormer; and th ratified on the preceding eve as to leave it no longer in I begged him no retract. Dormer had left me in igno stances, which I supposed tered designs; but which w change my previous decisior "All the threats and viol

were unable to move me. the discussion to a close, that the responsibility whi upon him, would be at a months, and that if I co mission quit his roof to wife, the marriage must be mination of my minority.

"My uncle, as soon as he became convinced that neither fierce altercations nor bitter taunts could shake my resolution, left me unmolested, and was content silently to despise my folly; but these instruments were still employed by my cousin, even though she too must have been persuaded of their futility. Enough; I will not dwell on the conduct that embittered my life during the remaining months which I passed with them. I will not revive my indignant remembrance of it. Days and months however wearisome, pass away. On the day that I was of age, my beloved brother gave my hand to Mr. Dormer."

Lady Esther eeased speaking, for they had reached the house; Venetia, when she helped her to alight, saw that she looked so pale and faint that she felt alarmed. She was about to follow her into her chamber whither she had supported her, when Lady Esther, stopping short, and embracing her tenderly, said with a sweet smile:

"Leave me now, my child; I wish to be alone. But fear nothing; I shall be no worse for the exertion of this evening, I am sure. Indeed, I feel that I shall be the better for it."

In this hope Lady Esther was deceived; she had greatly over-taxed her strength in the performance of the task she had imposed upon herself, and for days afterwards she was unable to support even the presence of her daughter in her sick chamber. But her purpose of furnishing Venetia with a subject for meditation was answered. For

in the solitude to which she was condemned thought long and deeply. She was dispose believe that Lady Esther had felt little more pity for Sydney Spencer, though in so gent bosom pity might easily be akin to love. words of the old poet were applicable:—

'Twas he who loved, and she who liked.

She could not suppose that her mother's suffer had equalled her own; but she saw and appreciate her motive in relating them, and her heart for that she should speak in vain. Lady Esther the pleasure of perceiving that Venetia rarely her side, and sedulously avoided all occupat that might feed her morbid fancy. Active healthful exertion filled her time. She bectranquil first, and gradually cheerful, and mother recognised with joy that the spirit of child did not rebel against the decrees of Pidence.

## CHAPTER XLV.

Or è mutato il corso alla mia vita, E volto il gaio tempo e i lieti giorni Che non sapean che cosa fosse un pianto, In gravi, travagliate e fosche notti!

Mr. Dormer returned from Naples, and the first intelligence communicated to Lady Esther and Venetia was that he had received a letter from Lord Llarnarmon.

"Here, Venetia," he said, "it is partly addressed to you, and you can read the whole. You will see then that my fears for your cousin appear but too well founded. I am very glad for his mother's sake, as well as for his own, that they are coming hither. I have secured apartments for them in the same palazzo as our own; and I hope that poor Lady Llarnarmon will find much consolation in your society and your mother's, and derive some support from it, if anything unfortunately occur to lessen or destroy the hopes which she yet clings to. Lermont will come with them."

As he spoke he gave the letter to Venetia. Lady Esther cast a hasty glance at her as she took it. Her countenance changed, and the variation of colour, the trembling of her lip bespoke her inward agitation.

She approached the window, read through the letter, and returned it to her father without remark. After the lapse of a few moments she rose, and left the room.

Lady Esther, convinced that she could not learn the intelligence of Lermont's coming without great emotion, longed to follow her; but was unwilling, at least without most serious consideration, to awakent suspicion in her father's mind. She therefore remained with him, asking him to show her her cousin's letter; having finished it, she laid it down with a sigh of sincere commiseration for the unhappy Lady Llarnarmon. After conversing with Mr. Dormer for a while on this subject, she said:

"It will be very dreadful to see this young mar dying gradually. I am afraid it will injure Ve netia's spirits, perhaps even her health, to pass her time in watching the sad progress of decay What can we do for her? It would perhaps have been better had you not established them so immediately with us; and yet I would not on any account abandon Lady Llarnarmon at such a time in a foreign land too!"

"Do not be too desponding," replied Mr Dormer; "after all, our English doctors have sent Theodore hither with many fair promises. Perhaps he will come to live, and not to die."

Mr. Dormer knew that his words were more sanguine than his conscience authorized him to

use. Presently he added: "I think that Venetia looks ill now; quite ill; but when we get her to Naples, the change of air and cheerful society will restore her bloom and gaiety."

Mr. Dormer was always in haste to dismiss a painful subject. Lady Esther knew this, and could not refrain from replying with a sigh:

"But our cousins will be there almost as soon as we shall, and I fear that their presence will banish cheerfulness."

After these words she went to seek Venetia. The state in which she found her caused her no surprise, only verifying her anticipation. She had cast herself upon a sofa, and her face was concealed from view; she did not move, nor betray any consciousness of Lady Esther's approach; not even when she stood beside her, and placing her hand gently on her head, bent over her and murmured in a low gentle voice: "My poor child!" At length a convulsive tremor passed over her whole frame, and she could no longer repress her sobs.

"My own Venetia," whispered her mother; "what can I do for you? Speak to me. Tell me if there is any thing you desire to have done."

"Nothing," replied Venetia, in a hollow voice. She checked her sobs, and rising from the couch, cast herself into her mother's arms in silence, but it was a silence of passionate eloquence. Then withdrawing herself from this close embrace, she said firmly, with an unfaltering voice and a tear-

less eye: "Weep not, mother, for me; if you love me, do not let me know myself to be a cause of grief to you. My struggle is past now; and I promise you that you shall have no cause to fear for me."

And Venetia fulfilled her words. From that day she maintained a deportment uniformly serene, and was even more remarkable for gaiety than she had hitherto been. She took a greater share in conversation than usual, and laying aside a certain indolence that was natural to her, seemed incessantly active and employed. As she did not relax in these efforts, nor appear to suffer from them, Lady Esther allowed her to pursue her course without remark; she knew that she had chosen the one which would most effectually shield her from observation and suspicion, and she hoped that she would be able to persevere in it.

They soon removed to Naples, and entered into the usual routine of festivity; and as the time drew near when they expected the arrival of their relatives, Venetia and her mother made every preparation for their reception, which they thought would promote their comfort. The day named for their coming arrived, but they were not expected before the evening; and during the afternoon, while Venetia and her mother were sitting together, a billet was brought to the former, which contained an invitation from her friend, the Contessa Giulia—to drive with her, and accompany her to the Opera to see the first representation of

a new piece that evening. Venetia, after reading this note, paused for a moment, and then gave it her mother, saying hastily:

"I think I shall go, mother."

Lady Esther looked up in some surprise; but she recollected that she knew Venetia too well to suppose that the mere amusement offered to her could induce her to form this resolution, and with an involuntary sigh she consented to it.

Poor Venetia! all that day had her mind been employed in the contemplation of every possible mode in which her first dreaded meeting with Claude could take place; and when the means of retarding this interview, though but for a few hours, were offered to her, she gladly availed herself of them; but no sooner had she accepted her friend's invitation than she began to regret having done so, and felt that it would have been far wiser to have passed through the necessary ordeal, and to have lost the anxiety of anticipation in reality. Many a 'premeditated resolve and resolved meditation,' did this subject cause her. She sometimes determined to assume such an air of guarded coldness and studied indifference, as should at once convince him of her intention to discourage every manifestation of tenderness on his part, and that she had totally discarded every sentiment of it in her-But again, though she told herself that she did not desire to see him nourish an unavailing love for her, yet she could not bear to act so as to destroy his affection by conduct arguing a want of

feeling, and fickleness that must lead him to believe her unworthy of it. Why, indeed, should she neglect the friendship of one she so highly esteemed; why forfeit approbation she so much valued? Was it necessary for her to appear insensible to his merits? Untouched by his misfortunes? No! She resolved rather to meet him with the frank cordiality of a friend, and without any embarrassment which could remind him how they had parted. She did not return till past midnight, and she learned only from the servant, that Lord and Lady Llarnarmon had arrived, with their suite; that the invalid had been greatly fatigued by the journey, and that her mother had spent the evening with Lady Llarnarmon.

Of Claude she heard nothing. She passed a sleepless night, and as soon as she rose, joined her father and mother at the breakfast-table. Her heart beat so violently that she could scarcely advance across the room, when she saw that Claude was with them. A mist seemed before her eyes. He approached to meet her respectfully, it seemed to her tranquilly; he waited for her to extend her hand to him; she gave it him, but it was cold as ice, and fell motionless from his, when he loosened his grasp; but she felt that she was so paralyzed that the colour on her cheek did not change as she spoke to him.

She went to her seat; and Claude, after the interchange of a few words with her father, the purport of which she did not hear, left the room. And now it was over! That meeting to which she had looked forward with anxiety, with dread, with desire! That moment for which she had formed plans and resolutions, and thought so many times how it would take place! Now that Claude was gone, she began to think how very ill and melancholy he had looked, how dispirited and fatigued. Raising her eyes for the first time, she perceived that her father had accompanied him, and that she was alone with her mother. She then inquired with a trembling voice of Theodore.

"Alas!" replied Lady Esther, "your father was greatly shocked to behold the rapid change in him. I, who have never seen him since his childhood, plainly read the threatening approach of death on his countenance, from which all traces of health and bloom have departed. His colourless lips, his sunken eye, and the bright spot that burned on his cheek, seemed to me when I observed them last night, most alarming tokens of premature decay; his frame too gives evident signs of the greatest debility."

Venetia burst into tears at these words, and in a few minutes left the room.

All that Lady Esther had said was but too true. Theodore was indeed

> Blasted in the bud, Losing his verdure even in the prime.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

Trop rigoureux effet d'une aimable présence, Contre qui mon devoir a trop peu de défense! Mais si vous estimez ce vertueux devoir, Conservez-m'en la gloire, et cessez de me voir. Epargnez-moi des pleurs, qui coulent à ma honte; Epargnez-moi des feux qu'à regret je surmonte; Enfin, épargnez-moi ces tristes entretiens Qui ne font qu'irriter vos tourmens et les miens.

CORNEILLE.

It was impossible that Lady Esther Dormer should not regard her young relative, and even more especially his friend, with the greatest interest; and they both seeing in her the mother of Venetia, received every mark of kindness from her hand with the utmost gratitude and respect. At first she observed the intercourse of Claude and Venetia with extreme anxiety, but she soon found that this was uncalled for.

Claude now that

. . . he found her in the circle
 Of all her kindred, in her father's arms,
 He held himself an alien in that circle;

and though he never forgot a certain dignity of deportment which self-respect demanded, yet he so

plainly evinced that he was conscious of the listance established between them, by the difference of their rank and station, that it would have been impossible for the narrowest observer to have read the secret of his presumptuous love; impossible for the tongue of report ever to have linked his name with hers, or ever to have pointed a remark that would have wounded her mother's ear. Lady Esther felt truly grateful to him for the delicacy of this conduct, and sought to display towards him every possible kindness.

The unhappy Venetia saw, (and seeing, confessed that she ought to share in it), the satisfaction which this conduct afforded her mother; and yet she felt that although Claude had selected that mode of behaviour which it was his duty to practise, and which freed her from the necessity of any deliberation as to what hers should be towards him, she suffered more from being reduced to this total naction, than she would have done, had a necessity existed of encountering and overcoming any diffisulty. She could not always patiently acquiesce in that which she approved. She sometimes expeienced the most bitter anguish, when she thought that she discerned real indifference in the calm demeanour assumed by Claude; and sometimes. when, in spite of his efforts, a gleam of secret ænderness broke forth, betrayed in a glance, a sigh, softened tone of the voice in speaking to her, in instance of more than general solicitude in all that concerned her, however trifling, when he was

at her side; —her spirits w her knowledge, and for the her countenance would d of her unclouded youth. dent to Claude, it had at l to wrap him in additions and he would make fresh were generally, either I defeated by others, to est from the society of the ci not wholly escape. Thes and of pain, of hope and o ceptible to each other, and eyes of those around them sufficed to destroy the pea to rob them of all repose spoilt child of fortune, wa lesson that

> Not to herself the wom Annexed and bound wi But she performs the b Who can transmute the Meet and disarm neces And what must be, tal And bear and foster it

Lady Llarnarmon med anxiety caused by Theodoc interest in Venetia, and the movements of him we enemy. This wretched a row that was come upon lessness of despair. She cherished no hope. She knew no repose. She scarcely dared to breathe a prayer; the presence of Claude was insupportably tormenting to her; the presence of her son was a cause of anguish,—the presence of all others was irksome, and even unendurable.

She did not dare to manifest her solicitude before Theodore; fearful of hastening the very event She had never once confessed her she dreaded. apprehensions to any human being; to any suggestions on the subject she would have listened with the most vehement anger, nor have permitted any one to breathe a hint of danger in her presence. She affected a buoyancy of hope; she spoke with an air of certainty; and then she would retire to give way to paroxysms of such agony as would have struck terror into the heart of any who had Lady Esther and Lady Theodora beheld them. 'had been friends in youth,' and though their characters had always been most opposite, they had vet loved each other tenderly. While the latter regarded with sincere admiration the virtues of her friend, and envied the peace of mind that ensued, the former could also discern many noble qualities and fine feelings, for such still existed in a heart torn by conflicting passions, and burdened by the weight of a fatal secret, haunting her alike in hours of seclusion and of intercourse with the world.

Though a vain attempt to silence the voice of conscience, and to escape the torments of remorse, gave to Lady Theodora's conduct frequently an

appearance of caprice and inconsistency which shocked and amazed Lady Esther, who was even under the direction of the unswerving rule of principle, still they had remained friends: and now the she met her in sorrow, Lady Esther's heart warme towards her as towards a sister, and she was willing to forget everything she had ever blamed in he and even the remarks she had recently heard from Venetia.

Lady Llarnarmon, on the contrary, never from the time of her arrival appeared to derive the slightest satisfaction, or consolation, from the society, or the affectionate attention of Venetion or her mother. She seemed neither to love the now, nor to remember that she ever had love them.

Before long, as she marked the growing intere which Lady Esther took in her son, and the grateful affection he bestowed on her in return she betrayed many restless symptoms of displeasure and jealousy. She fancied that the quiet repose of Lady Esther's manner rendered her society most acceptable to Theodore, than her own restless in patience allowed hers to be. This she resented and as she did not venture to reproach Theodor she assumed a cold, repellent manner toward Lady Esther, from which she never relaxed, excepting when she dreaded that it might lead to demand of an explanation of the cause. She woul in order to avoid this, unbend for a while; at Lady Esther, full of pity, and slow to comprehen

the workings of her distracted mind, felt no resentment for her wayward humour, and sought by the exercise of every possible act of kindness, to win her from herself.

Theodore had not long known Lady Esther Dormer, before he conceived the idea that it would be possible to confide to her the secret which pressed so heavily upon his heart.

The dread of the disappointment and grief that such a disclosure would cause his mother had alone withheld him hitherto; but he felt too much self reproach, whenever he saw Venetia and Claude beside him, and read in the pale cheek of one, and the constrained demeanour of the other, the inward strife of their hearts, to allow this concealment long to exist: the desire of gaining an opportunity of making this important communication to Lady Esther, and of consulting her as to his subsequent conduct, was the very cause of his seeking her society in the manner which excited his mother's jealousy.

### CHAPTER LVII.

Soffermatevi un poco,—poi guardate Se v'è dolor che agguagli al mio dolore.

REDI.

LADY LLARNARMON did not refuse sometimes to accompany Venetia in her morning drives, which her mother was frequently too ill to do; and Venetia on such occasions endeavoured to think of some object that would excite her interest. She rarely gazed however on any of the beauties of either nature or art that they led her to behold, with other than a languid air, and an unobservant eye; or if she found herself a moment false to the ruling thought of her heart, she would, with self reproach, fly back to it with renewed passion.

One day as they passed a church, which Venetia knew that she had never entered, she proposed to her to visit it, making it appear as if it were her own desire to do so. She assented, and as they entered, they met Mr. Dormer and several friends employed also in the survey of the curious and beautiful objects which it was known to contain. Among them was a painter, a man of taste and enthusiasm; he was an Italian, and Venetia's attention was soon attracted by the fervent expressions of admiration in which he indulged,

and by the excellence of his critical remarks. He led them at length into a remote chapel to see one of those chefs-d'œuvre that in the Italian churches, abound in a state of 'gran diperimento,' imparting a most melancholy air of decay to the walls they once so richly adorned.

Lady Llarnarmon, who had hitherto remained wholly absorbed in her own thoughts, and deaf to all the conversation around her, now felt her interest greatly excited by the figure of a woman, who was kneeling on the steps of an altar near which they had placed themselves. Her form was completely shrouded in black; a large black shawl covered her head and shoulders, and concealed the outline of her face. Neither their approaching steps nor continued conversation caused the slightest movement, or appearance of consciousness in her statue-like figure.

Lady Llarnarmon moved a little apart to observe her more particularly. She could only see a pale, thin hand that held a book of prayer, and that seemed to indicate that the prime of life was past, and to denote sickliness and feebleness. She could not turn away her eyes from her, but watched her with a melancholy interest.

At last the unfortunate woman bowed down till her head touched the steps above, and there she lay, crouching in agony; her frame, even beneath the garments that enveloped it, visibly shaken by sobs that were inaudible.

The altar piece of the chapel in which she

prayed, was one of those sad conceptions of Mater Dolorosa which are almost too painful contemplation. The whole scene spoke so dir to Lady Theodora's heart that she could not frain from a gush of tears; and lingering be her companions, she approached the unh stranger, afraid to interrupt her devotions, yet unable to quit the spot, without first inqu whether her griefs were of such a nature a admit of human aid.

After the lapse of a few moments the we raised her prostrate form, and returned to former position.

Lady Llarnarmon then approached her, addressing her in Italian, said in a low earnest ve "Are you very unhappy?"

The woman raised her hand, and turned to with such a look! a look of such anguish and despot such intolerable pain! of such sickening son and then she turned away again without speal and folding her faded hands on her bosom, ro to and fro restlessly, as if to still the insupporgnawing within. But there had been somethin Lady Theodora's anxious gaze of pity that softened her heart, for though she did not speak the big tear drops began to gather under eye-lids, and to fall slowly one by one on her a garb of woe. Lady Theodora laid her hand go and tenderly upon her and said: "Is there no for you?"

"None! none!" exclaimed the poor crea bursting suddenly into a flood of tears, no lo able to restrain her sobs and groans; then angrily and passionately shaking off Lady Theodora's hand, she impetuously exclaimed: "Who are you? Why do you come hither? Why do you speak to me?" and again she bowed her head to the ground.

Lady Theodora replied sadly: "Because I pitied you so much. Is there nothing that I can do for you? Let me then at least pray with you?" and she sank on her knees beside her.

The woman rose, and gazed on her with a look of mingled astonishment and gratitude, and then uttered in a piercing voice: "My child is dead!" as she spoke, she raised her arms wildly over her head.

Lady Theodora caught one of her hands as it fell, and replied in tones of equal anguish: "My child is dying!"

This was the first time that she had ever given utterance to this fearful truth; and these miserable mothers wept and prayed together, without again proffering one useless word of consolation.

Lady Theodora, at length remembering that her absence would be observed, rose to return to those whom she had accompanied; but, before she went, she drew from her purse a coin of some value, and offered it with caution, scarcely knowing whether or not she was likely to offend.

The woman however took it with avidity, exclaiming as she did so; "This shall purchase masses for his soul!" then seizing the hand of her

newly found friend, she pressed it eagerly to her lips.

Lady Theodora would have suggested to her the unprofitableness of such expenditure; but she no sooner made the woman sensible of her meaning, than she waved her hand with the utmost dignity in order to silence her, and replied: "I know that with you it is a duty to forget the dead; but we remember them, and pray for them, and love them. I will deny myself bread, but I will not deny my son masses for his dear soul."

Struck by the turn the woman had given to her intention, Lady Llarnarmon almost envied her superstition, and hastily telling her where she was to be found, if she wanted anything she could give her, she asked her name before she left her.

"Regina," returned the woman loftily; and Lady Llarnarmon, quitting the chapel, almost immediately found Venetia, who was in search of her. She replied briefly to her inquiries concerning her absence, and went home more sad and more silent than before.

After Lady Llarnarmon's return, this conversation recurred often to her memory, and she began to think that her child was fast going to that kingdom 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest;' and that she, if she did not now repent, should never cease from troubling, and never know rest; that she, who could so ill support any separation from him while on earth, was on the brink of being separated from him for eternity.

The figure of Regina, her passionate words and energetic gestures, the flashing of her dark eye and the quivering anguish of her lips, were perpetually presenting themselves to her memory, and their sympathy of feeling excited an interest in her, greater far than any that had been awakened in her bosom for a long time. In her musings she would often desire to know, whether Regina's lost child had been like her own, pure and innocent, and if his mother had, in losing him, lost her sole comfort and joy as she should do. She would also wish to know, whether Regina, sorrowing not as those who have no hope, was looking forward to a second meeting, after which there should be no separation to anticipate; or if, like her, despair had entered into her soul, and she knew that where he was, there would be no admission for her. She felt an anxious wish to see Regina again, and hoped that she might come to her to claim her promise of further aid; often, as she drove through the streets, she would eagerly scrutinize every form that resembled hers, and look beneath the folds of every veil in hopes of discerning her features. one occasion, at length, she was gratified. One day when the weather was remarkably inviting, Theodore declared his desire to take an airing with them, and accordingly Venetia and his mother prepared to accompany him; but some trifling

cause led the latter to delay their departure for: few minutes.

They were seated in the carriage awaiting he when Venetia's eye was caught by the figure of woman who stood at a little distance, regarding them with a fixed and earnest gaze. She wi dressed in black, and her head covered with a large black shawl. Her fine countenance and majest carriage attracted Venetia's observation; but a much was her attention transfixed by the impresive singularity of her whole appearance, that st could not turn from her even to point her out 1 the observation of her companion. Her lan black eyes were fixed on Theodore, with an expre sion of the tenderest solicitude, and even matern love. She gazed on him for a short space of time her eye was filled with tears, and mournfully shakin her head she uttered in a tone of the deepest is terest:

# " Muore!"

At this moment Lady Llarnarmon entered the carriage; the woman cast a look, bespeaking the utmost commiseration, on her, and instantly departed.

Venetia sank back, shocked and appalled by the one word which had escaped the lips of this strang apparition. She glanced at Lady Llarnarmon countenance, in fear that it might have caughter ear, but it had not done so. Lady Llarnarmon, who had recognized Regina, was only full disappointment at her sudden departure.

The attendant lacche (who had all the loquacity which that class are allowed to indulge for the benefit of strangers) seeing, with the acuteness of an Italian, that their interest was much excited, significantly shrugged his shoulders, and after a little further encouragement proceeded to inform them that the woman whom he divined to be the object of their curiosity, had been repeatedly at the same post, and had expressed to him an ardent desire to see the son of the English lady who resided at the Palazzo. In order to gratify her, he had told her that if she waited where he had stationed her, she would before long see the young 'Milor Ingless e he Signora madre' issue from their dwelling.

This circumstance did not render their drive more cheerful.

## CHAPTER LVIII.

Hence, ye heart-stealing schemes, with syren ways, Suggesting visions vain. Ye hopes that cling to earth, come home.

Against myself I will in you rejoice.

THOUGHTS IN PAST YEARS.

THE brilliancy of the autumnal weather led the English, who were now flocking to Naples, to continue later than usual their excursions to the surrounding spots, whose celebrity exacts a visit from every stranger, and whose beauty allures those, who have once seen them, often to retrace their steps.

Mr. Dormer, whose heart was really distressed by the sight of so much grief, strove to engage Lady Llarnarmon in everything that could interest her, and divert her mind from the one melancholy subject that engrossed it. He caused Venetia to propose to her such amusements as he thought could be suggested without exciting positive repugnance; and Claude not unfrequently shared in them, at the earnest request of Theodore, who however felt that, until his disclosure had been made, the intercourse which he thus promoted between his brother and his cousin, was painful to them both. The self-reproach which this caused

him soon became so intolerable, that he resolved that he would impart, without delay at least to Lady Esther a knowledge that would set her heart at rest with respect to the happiness of her child. One evening when they were together, Mr. Dormer suggested an excurs on to Baiæ, and its lovely and interesting vicinity, for the occupation of the following day; and Lady Llarnarmon, at her son's repeated solicitation, acquiesced in the plan. After having obtained this consent, Theodore approached Lady Esther, and said to her in a low voice:

"You, I know, will not accompany them. Let me come to you to-morrow. I particularly desire to have a conversation with you; but it is on a subject of some importance and interest; therefore, you must not see me if you are ill."

Lady Esther's eye at this moment chanced to fall on Lady Llarnarmon's countenance; and for the first time, the thought entered her mind that her friend watched with jealousy the affection of her son's manner towards her. She was amazed at a sentiment so foreign to her own. Had she ever felt the slightest dissatisfaction excited by the extreme fondness, which had at one time existed between her and Venetia? But on reflection she acknowledged, that it was evident that Theodore had not that confidence in his mother that her child reposed in her; and that, though their mutual love might possibly be as unbounded, some trifling causes of estrangement, or rather of distrust, appeared to exist between them. Full of

compassion as she was towards Lady Llarnarmon, she was most averse to causing her the slightest additional pain, and she therefore resolved to abstain cautiously for the future, from any appearance of filling her station with Theodore. To his pre-

sent request she replied, with a smile:

"I will tell you in the morning if I am equal to such a conference:" and then rising, she went and seated herself beside Lady Llarnarmon, and endeavoured, with the utmost kindness, to awaken in her an anticipation of pleasure from the plans for the following day. "Mr. Dormer must be your cicerone," she said. Lady Llarnarmon, even in the bitterness of her heart, could not resist the charm of Lady Esther's gentleness, and she parted from her that evening with more cordiality and frankness of manner, than she had displayed towards her since her arrival.

Lady Esther was very desirous to fulfil her promise to Theodore, as she thought from his earnestness, he might have some request to make, some service to ask perhaps, something to suggest respecting the future, which weighed upon his mind. Soon after the party had set out on their projected excursion, she therefore sent to him to tell him that she was ready to receive his visit; and when he complied with her invitation, she was grieved to see that he looked more than ordinarily weak and exhausted. But his countenance was cheerful, even beaming with satisfaction, as though his mind were filled with thoughts of hope and joy, and his inward screnity undisturbed by a single feeling of self-reproach. How habitual had this heavenly expression now become upon his face! betokening a peace that the world cannot take away!

As Lady Esther gazed affectionately on him, she felt how bitterly his mother's heart must grieve at the approach of separation. After a short conversation on indifferent themes, Lord Llarnarmon himself, without hesitation or embarrassment, led to the cause of his seeking this interview.

"It was no trifle, dear Lady Esther," said he, "that brought me hither this morning; and I have many reasons for selecting you, rather than any other person, to listen to the communication, I have to make. In the first place, it will fall heavily, oh! how heavily on my poor mother!" He paused, and leaning his forehead on his hand, for a few moments concealed his face; then he continued:

"You have always been my mother's friend; you understand her character better than any one else; its strength and its weakness; her passionate feelings; her noble qualities and her faults. You have, as I said, always been her friend, and since you have known me, you have been a most kind friend to me. I have felt your kindness far more deeply than I have expressed."

"Nay," interrupted Lady Esther, much affected;
what have you received from me that calls for
thanks?"

"Much," replied Theodore; "but I am not here to talk of myself, but of those far more dear to me, far more precious to you. I am sure, Lady Esther, that brief as is the time that we have been here, it has been long enough to reveal to you the deep affection which my friend entertains for your daughter. Is it not so?"

"I will not profess blindness which does not exist," answered Lady Esther. "I am aware of it. I feel much for the painfulness of the situation in which your friend is unavoidably placed. But, my dear Theodore, when there is such a total exclusion of hope, of what avail is it even to approach

so painful a subject?"

"You say you feel compassion for Claude," continued Theodore, without replying to her interrogation; "but does he alone excite your pity and your interest? Have you no alarm for your daughter? Having seen and known Claude, can you believe that any woman, feeling herself (as she must) to be passionately loved by him, can remain indifferent? Can any maxim of prudence, can her consideration for her parents, her own dread of the anguish of a hopeless passion, suffice to silence in her heart a reply to the sentiments of his? Is this possible? Do you believe that it will be so; do you believe that it is so?"

"Theodore," exclaimed Lady Esther in extreme agitation, and with unusual vivacity, "you disturb me cruelly. Why will you thus probe my heart to the very quick? Why thus distract me by the

representation of inevitable evil? The situation of my child is indeed fraught with peril; and yet I cannot snatch her from the brink of the precipice on which she trembles. I am constrained to be passive. The event is in the hands of Heaven. So be it! She is not blind to her danger, she may save herself, though others cannot save her."

"It is true," said Theodore slowly; "she does know the utter impossibility of her becoming the wife of Claude Lermont. You say that I have probed your heart too deeply; now let me lay bare my own before you. I too have loved; loved in vain! I have loved Venetia as truly as Claude loves her. I knew her first; there was a tie between us, which seemed to give a kind of sanction to my hope that my passion might meet a return. Every earthly advantage seemed to support my claims to be listened to favourably; but I saw that I made no impression on her heart; I knew when I myself brought Claude beneath the same roof, and told her that he was to me as a brother, that she did not love me; and I saw from the first day that they met, that flame spring up in their hearts which I had so vainly sought to light. what avail then to me have been rank, station, and wealth? Of what avail the earnest passion that awaked no reply? I am fading away as the flower that perisheth! Perhaps I must have died, even had Venetia loved me! Of what avail might not these things have been to Claude! Blessed with

health and vigour, loving and beloved! Oh! why were they not rather his than mine? Tell me have you not asked this question and silenced it is your heart? And has it not recurred again, and excited a vain, fond wish, and a meditation or what might have been, and pleasant pictures, not to be realized, but from which you turned away with a sigh? Such musings have been mine Have they not been yours also? Have they no been Venetia's?"

Lady Esther could not refrain from tears as she listened to the touching accents of his low, musical voice. He himself was calm, though mournful speaking as one to whom all these things were past. "And now," said Theodore suddenly, "I have to tell you that it is even so. Claude Lermont is Lord Llarnarmon, and I am only Theodore De Glynne."

Lady Esther was too much astonished, and ever too much alarmed to reply, or to interrogate; and Theod e sinking back on his seat, continued with agitation:

"This is very strange—startling; but still quit true—complete and satisfactory in its proofs, and I will lay them all before you, if you wish it; now to-day." And as soon as Lady Esther became sufficiently composed to listen to him, he did rever to her all that he had learned, and how and when he learned it; and he added, as they were after wards conversing together:

"What I have suffered from this temporary suspension of confidence between myself and Claude; I cannot express to you; and since I have been here, I have felt as if acting the part of a traitor to Claude and to Venetia; I could bear it no longer, and I know that if I could, I ought not. can honestly say that the sole motive that has retarded this confession, has been the dread of what it will cost my mother to hear it. To me it will be the sweetest end of life that could have been vouchsafed, thus to find that in my last hours, my latest task on earth is to impart happiness to those who hold the dearest place in my heart. If I could by any reasoning induce my mother to entertain the same sentiments, and lead her to rejoice with me in beholding the course of justice no longer impeded, and unmerited sufferings removed, then indeed could I look on the day on which I made this discovery with unmitigated joy; and it is here that I seek your aid and counsel. I cannot even for her sake, (neither conscience nor feeling will allow it) permit this secret to remain unknown until I am in the grave. I cannot die in peace, unless I first see Claude re-instated in his rights, and acknowledged by all the world as my brother."

"You asked my counsel," replied Lady Esther, when Lord Llarnarmon ceased speaking. "I cannot give it hastily. Let me have time to consider well before you proceed further."

"You shall," said Theodore; "but I clonger delay to confide to Claude all that I told you; and with him also will I consult my proceedings." With these words he tool of her.

#### CHAPTER LIX.

Teach me for my transgression Some fair excuse! The fairest is confession.

LOVE'S LABOUR LOST.

THEODORE having once broken the bonds of silence, could not close his eyes that night without revealing to Claude all that he had learned in his interview with Roger Grierson, and all that had taken place in his transactions with Mr. Arthur. The overflowing love with which he pressed him to his heart as his brother, the delicacy with which he manifested his joy in the acquisition, appearing totally to lose all consideration and thought of what he lost, or his brother gained, made Claude inwardly acknowledge that however ardent his affection had been hitherto, when watching beside him, while death was hovering near, or when it nerved him to steel his heart against all other passions,against love and against resentment; or when it enabled him to endure patiently an undeserved stigma on his birth, and on his mother's fame;—he had never fully known its strength, until his heart was melted within him, by this crowning act of tender devotion, of total self-abnegation, and generosity not to be surpassed!

Almost the first words that Theodore used, c veyed to the mind of Claude the impression t he was still wholly ignorant that his mother been in any way the wilful cause of the commiss of this act of treachery, and quite unconscious t the information he had so lately obtained had l been in her possession. Claude knew his brot too well not to feel that were he, by the disclos of the truth, to substitute feeling of reprehenfor those of the tenderest pity, with which he I regarded his mother, his tongue would spea truth more fatal to his happiness than any divulged. The dread of betraying his previ knowledge, and the uncertainty in which he as to the mode of conduct he should pursue, parted an embarrassment to his manner wh Theodore naturally attributed to bewilderment the novelty, and surprising change of his c dition; and not erroneously did he believe that part it was owing to the unaffected reluctance his heart to accept a benefit which, according to common ideas of the world, must cost his brot so dear, and which in fact, through the dishon which so much duplicity cast on their father memory, could not be devoid of pain to either.

Claude dreaded the probable effects of so me excitement on Theodore, who however fortunal now began to sink into a state of lassitude, little to be overcome as his former restless and which at length induced him to consent to Claud desire to quit him.

As soon as Claude was alone, and had time

reflection, he determined as quickly as possible to warn Lady Llarnarmon of her son's discovery, and calmly and deliberately, to discuss and to weigh with her the difficulties of her present situation. The shock of revealing how far she had been implicated in guilt he dreaded to inflict on Theodore in his present state, and saw an absolute necessity for consulting Lady Llarnarmon, as he plainly perceived that Theodore would not be induced to prolong the secrecy which he had hitherto maintained.

He concluded that it would be impossible for him to see Lady Llarnarmon that night, as, after the fatigues of the day, she had probably sought rest at an early hour. This he felt that he could not himself enjoy, and he continued to reflect on the strange events of the day, on the entire overthrow of all his own designs, and the mysterious modes by which Providence works; sometimes obscurely and secretly until the very moment arrives when those plans which may not be counteracted are accomplished and revealed. Oppressed by the heat of the evening, and by the fever of his own blood, he approached his window, and threw it open. he did so, he perceived with surprise that the light. in the apartments which they occupied during the day, was still unextinguished. As he looked in that direction he fancied that he discerned a figure pass and repass repeatedly the windows of the chamber, on the side of the court opposite to that on which he was standing. Who could this be, if not Lady Llarnarmon? Possessed with this idea,

he suddenly sprang up, determined at once to seek her, and without delay to execute his important design. He hastened to the room in which he expected to find her, and entering it, stopped short inspired at the appearance of Lady Llarnarmon with a momentary awe that made him feel as it guilty of an unjustifiable intrusion. She was pacing to and fro in a state of agitation such as she had never yet exhibited to any mortal eye. He head was uncovered, her hair unbound, and he whole aspect denoted such majestic grief, that any beholder, calm enough to have made the comparison, would have called to mind the impressive sorrows of the Lady Constance, when they were

Past all counsel, all redress, But that which ends all comfort, true redress, Death!

In those distracted hours when

Grief filled the room up of her absent child, she deplored so vainly and so pathetically—

Her son—her fair boy, Her life, her joy, her food, her all the world, Her widow's comfort, and her sorrow's cure.

At the unwelcome apparition of Claude, she regarded him with a countenance full of indignation haughtily demanding the cause of this intrusion Claude, restored to self-possession by a sense of the importance of affecting his purpose, closed the door behind him, and advancing towards her said not without sternness:

" Everything has become known to Theodore, en

cept the share you bore in our father's deceit. Of this he is yet ignorant; but how shall he remain so?"

At these words so abruptly uttered, the unhappy woman cast herself on her knees before Claude, and with sobs and groans of agony not to be described, exclaimed:

"Spare me, Claude; spare me once more!"

"Lady Llarnarmon," replied Claude, "I would willingly spare you, for by so doing I should spare Theodore. Few were my words of reproach or of expostulation, at the time when you had it in your power to injure me, and when you were doing so to the utmost of that power. Now that you are powerless, I would spare you most willingly; but, as I said, it would be for his sake. Were I to consult your good only, I could not spare you in the way which you ask; and indeed I feel a sentiment of compassion, and a reproof of conscience, that force me to speak to you of repentance, while there is yet time. I urge you to confession, for I know that you ought to confess. What have you now to dread, that you should still obstinately refuse to seek the only remedy for the past? Oh! Lady Llarnarmon, turn not away. It is the brother of your child who speaks. Listen to me as you would listen if I were your son."

But Lady Llarnarmon would not listen; she waved her hand impatiently, and he retired.

### CHAPTER L.

Je ne viens point armée d'un indigne artifice D'un voile d'équité couvrir mon injustice.

RACINE.

When Claude sought Theodore the nex morning, he found him as he expected, fully pre pared to communicate to his mother, all that he ha revealed to him the preceding night.

"Do not lose time, dear Claude," he said, play fully, "in vain expostulations. Go to Venetic Her mother will, I am sure, have prepared her t expect you. It is cruel," he added, seriously, "t keep her longer in suspense; I too must see he and obtain her pardon for having caused her muc sorrow."

Claude could not reply to his brother in word but fervently pressing his hand, he left him an went to obey his injunctions. If Claude himse had little room for doubt as to the reception I should meet with, our readers can have still les We will therefore remain with Theodore and h mother, rather than accompany him.

Passionate as was Lady Llarnarmon's nature, hours of need none had ever surpassed her in the power of refraining from any manifestations of the

strife within. So little effect had the earnest appeal of Claude, that the only thought which afforded her any consolation in her frantic despair, was a determination to assume an appearance of scornful disbelief of assertions so improbable, that cast such discredit on the honoured dead. Her resolution to commit this last act of desperation restored her to outward calmness. She decided that her first step should be to demand an immediate investigation of all the proofs in Theodore's possession, with a vague hope that some difficulties might thence arise, that should at least impede the clear demonstration of those truths of which she had been accustomed to consider herself the sole guardian. Thus prepared to combat, and not entirely despairing of victory, for she had so long practised deceit with success; so often escaped from the greatest perils: that she could not realize to her mind the idea that the hour was now come in which she was to be robbed of the fruits of all her labours: all for which she had striven with her husband in his hours of death; all for which the whole peace of life had been sacrificed. And she went to meet her son, wearing as tranquil a countenance as she could assume, and feigning total blindness to the agitation that was visible on his. It was with the utmost caution and delicacy that Theodore approached the dreaded subject. No sooner had the declaration passed his lips, than Lady Llarnarmon assumed an air of lofty astonishment and utter contempt, of which he found it impossible to disarm her; and not until her own eyes had surveye proof that vouched for the truth of his na would she permit herself to believe that s foiled and disarmed at all points. pared 'to instruct her sorrows to be proud,': demeanour contradicted all expectations. dore was amazed, as well as greatly reliev the calmness with which she finally sub when no longer able to doubt his stat or to rebel against his declared intention devoted affection for him never appear strong, nor so open in its demonstrations after a few hours this gentle mood, so ing to him, past away, and was succeed greater irascibility than she had yet in From thenceforward she seemed disposed on every one around them as her enem as Theodore's, and strove to make him them in the same light. She said to him o with a passionate flood of tears:

"Come, my son, let us go away, and be

together."

"What, mother," replied Theodore rej fully, "do you think I can leave my newly brother?"

Her face, as he thus alluded to Claude, I disfigured by an expression so bitter, that | inexpressibly shocked at beholding it. Aft reply, or rather rebuke, though a gentle of still refused to appear before any one of the had been informed of the humiliating change required of Theodore also to banish them from his society, telling him bitterly that he would have his mother left. Theodore replied firmly, though gently, that this could not be.

"Do not ask me, mother," he said, " to relinquish the delight of beholding Claude and Venetia happy."

Finding all her frantic endeavours ineffectual she quitted him, angrily bidding him to make the choice between her or them, for that she never would endure the humiliation of their presence.

Theodore was greatly afflicted by this conduct. He turned to Lady Esther for comfort and advice, but Claude was the only person who possessed the real clue to Lady Llarnarmon's behaviour, and he was at a loss flow to proceed.

While they were together conversing on this painful subject, the door of the apartment in which they sat, opened unexpectedly, and, to their amazement, Lady Theodora appeared at it. At a glance they perceived a difference in her whole deportment since last they saw her. The majesty of her carriage was broken down, as by a crushing weight of many sorrows; her raven hair in which there had long been many shining threads of silver, was still more perceptibly whitened, and her face wore a sad and mournful aspect, far more touching than the angry grief that had so often darkened it. She advanced towards them, and looking round, exclaimed:

"Where is Venetia? Claude, go and bring her hither."

Claude silently obeyed. Lady Llarnarmon upon a seat, and resting her head upon her covered her face with one hand, while the she placed in Theodore's, who pressed it te to thank her for her coming. Claude an netia returned together, and silently joine circle, expecting they knew not what.

Lady Llarnarmon began to speak; her m was wild, and it seemed to cost her a violent to maintain sufficient self-command to do so coherence.

"I am come," she said, "to finish what son has begun; and I would have you all that my confession may be more complete shame more public."

Claude started forward at these words to her, and to entreat her to proceed no fa

"Be silent, Lady Llarnarmon, I implore; he said in the greatest perturbation; "re tion has been made; your words are useless silent for his sake," he added, casting an at ing look on Theodore; but Lady Llarnarmon tinued:

"I am come to achieve a great work, my dore, and above all I am come to unmask I you a hypocrite who has played her part the hour you were born with unwearied cons and uninterrupted duplicity;—and Claude, it is who would now close my lips, who have n me to speak! The last words which you addit to me, uttered almost in spite of yourself, rung unceasingly in my ears, and I am he

## CONTRITION.

obey them. I come, Theodore, to breathe to you a secret which you will believe to be the dream of delirium; but Claude shall vouch for the truth of it. I come to tell you that I knew from your birth that you had a brother, an elder brother! I knew it long before, and I robbed him of his birthright and kept it for my son! You start: nevertheless believe me. I knew too from my first meeting with Claude, that he was that brother, and how that knowledge made me hate him! You saw that I regarded him with uncontrollable aversion; that I persecuted him with unprovoked animosity; that I strove to remove him from your side. You saw all this. Now you learn the cause. You were dying. I thought that you were struck by the hand of Heaven, and I went and crouched at his feet for mercy; and I had mercy. -and how I hated him who granted it! Oh! my former hatred was love compared to my latter hatred! Nevertheless, I will now do him justice. He knew from that time that he could punish me when he willed, by snatching from me the fruits of my crime; that he could retaliate all my insults and my injuries; that he could at once gratify revenge, ambition, love, and this without soiling his soul by sin, without incurring never ending remorse. He had but to stretch out his hand and take that which was his own, and was wrongfully kept from him. But he did not stretch out his hand; he did not right himself, nor clear his mother's fame; he did not do this

because he loved you; and yet I continued to hate him; and now, when further concealment was impracticable, he came to me to know if I could sugges aught that should veil the truth from your eves for he grieved to think of the pang it would cos you to learn my guilt. Enough! You have loved him long, but you never knew him until now ;now love him more !"

And Lady Llarnarmon covered her face with her hands, and sobbed aloud; and Theodore beck oned Claude towards him, and tenderly embracing him, wept upon his bosom.

"Claude," he said in an almost inaudible voice

" I cannot love you more!"

After a silence of some continuance, broke only by the voice of weeping, Lady Llarnarmo

spoke again:

"Nor have I yet accomplished my task. I hav done justice to the living, and now I have to d justice to the dead. I have still to clear th memory of your father; to tell you how long since he would have revoked his errors, and restored! Claude his birthright, and to you your brother. A this would have been done; but I stepped forward! stem the tide of remorse that would have bee strong enough to bear away all the barriers the had been placed to impede the course of justic but was not strong enough to overpower my oppos tion."

And she went on, and told all the terrible scenthat had taken place beside her husband's death bed. The horror-stricken countenance with which she detailed these circumstances, made it evident to all her auditors that this it was which had preyed most heavily on her conscience; and this testified to them the truth of her repentance.

## CHAPTER LI.

Amando me, come so che m'ami, debbe Il mio, più che 'l tuo gaudio rallegrarti. Di me t' incresca, ma non altrimente Che s'io vivessi ancor, t' incresceria D'una partita mia.

Che tu avesti a seguir in pochi giorni, E se qualche e qualch' anno anco soggiorni Col tuo mortal a patir caldo e verno, Lo dei stimar per un momento breve Verso quest 'altro, che mai non riceve Nè termine, nè fin, viver eterno.

ARIOSTO.

Whatever feelings had hitherto existed to check the free course of affection, and the interchange of every sentiment between Theodore and his mother, were now annihilated; and he most anxiously endeavoured to convince her that such was the case. The confession which was dictated by repentance, could not provoke wrath, but on the contrary disarmed for ever all animosity; there was not one who had heard her disclosure, not one whom she had injured, not one to whom the words of her lips had revealed a new and unthought of character in her, who did not feel for her bitter humiliation, and strive to banish from her mind by

the tenderness they displayed, that remembrance of her degradation which they knew must crush her to the earth. But their task was no longer to conciliate the haughtiness of an untamed spirit; it was rather not to crush a broken reed. Lady Llarnarmon was an altered woman. Theodore was the first to discern, and the one most deeply to rejoice in this entire change. Great was his anxiety to demonstrate to her all his love and joy. He treated her now with a fondness far beyond what he had ever before displayed. He could not bear that she should be out of his sight; he received no food or medicine but from her hand: she alone supported his faltering steps: and whenever he was able to converse, his voice was employed in uttering the most soothing truths, discussing the most holy themes, and dilating on the most elevating topics, that he could suggest to her mind.

In spite of the sincere humility of her contrition, it was not possible for Lady Llarnarmon to anticipate in thought the hour of separation without dread and horror, which were aggravated, not soothed, by the calmness with which her son looked forward to it. This additional evidence of his angelic purity, while it bade her hope all things for him, at the same time seemed to forewarn her that where he went, she could not come. Her terrified conscience threatened her with the approach of a period when she must look her last on her stricken child, the object of an affection so

passionate, and hitherto so earthly. An agoni thought smote her that when he should rest in Father's bosom, that ardent love which she k he would cherish for her to the last momen life, would then be for ever extinguished in heart; for that to the saints in Heaven, sin n appear far more sinful than to those on earth, their peace must be ensured from all future turbance by the detachment of their affect from every thing that is not "lovely." Such we the thoughts by which she was frequently haun and were well calculated to drive her to u despair.

But though

Stern was the on-look of necessity,

Theodore was not destitute of means of bring consolation to her fainting spirit. On the tri lation of the present were founded his best he for the future. He hailed her admission into school of adversity, where wisdom's voice is hea a voice that cries not aloud,

Where pride of earth, and passion do abound.

While he acknowledged that the path she now to tread, would never again be illumined the meteor lights of joy, he told her that darkness might be dispelled by the dawn of h shining brighter and brighter, unto perfect day

The tendency of all his conversations wit was to tranquillize her mind, and to infuse it

resignation and confident trust in the mercy of Heaven.

"Think, dearest mother," he said to her one day, "who were those who most eagerly sought their Saviour, and most unhesitatingly believed in Him? Were they those who were exceeding joyful, or those who were in great tribulation? The latter surely—then is it good to be afflicted! Remember how many of those who followed our Lord, were sorrowing even as you are sorrowing, for the child of their affections. And how did He receive them? Did He ever turn a deaf ear to their cries? Did He ever refuse them aid or comfort? He is not farther from you, than He was from them. Though you discern Him not, He is as truly beside my couch, marking my down sittings and my uprisings, as He was beside the damsel that slept; and His strength is not waxed more feeble than it was in the hour when He awoke her, and restored her to her parents' arms. He is not farther from you than He was from the widow of Nain, when He stopped her at the gate, and bid her son arise. Be assured, therefore, that you can want nothing that is not denied to you by Him. Be assured, therefore, that all that you want, it is best for you should be wanting."

These words of Theodore's were succeeded by a long silence, which was suddenly broken by his mother, down whose cheeks the tears were streaming, who exclaimed passionately:

"Theodore, if you will not pray to live for

yourself, pray that you may live for me. here awhile to complete the work which is begun. I dare not let you go; do not, I is you, do not leave me yet. Your voice teach resignation, but when I shall no longer list you, where shall I learn it? How shall I be to persevere in the work of repentance we

you, my sole guide ?"

" Mother," replied Theodore, mournfull solemnly, "I will not pray to live. Shall sume to assert that I am the instrument cho-God, without whose power you cannot b held? His gracious Spirit works not always the way that men would think most fittir will, I do, without ceasing, pray that He will with you, and perfect what He has begun. on your hasty words, and recal them, for d upon it, if when the hour of trial come you, you fall away, your repentance has been sincere, nor your heart cleansed from leprosy of sin. Can you refuse to resign whom you ought in some sense to look up the child of sin, to the hands of your Lor Judge, when He calls for me? Forget no that many were the years of your trium guilt; many perhaps will be those of you trite sorrow! When your post is no long side my bed, sit not on the ground in repining, but arise and devote all your rem energies to the furtherance of the happing those you once deeply injured. Take Claus Venetia to your heart, as though they were your children. Their love will cheer your life; and if it sometimes convey a tacit reproach, may that quicken your efforts to repay it! And now mother, I would not have you leave me till death come."

## CHAPTER LII.

O! aspettata in ciel, beata e bella Anima!

PETRARCA.

Alma beata e bella,
Vattene in pace omai
Del tuo amor goder il premio eterno,
LODOVICO PATERNO.

And that boon of life for which Theodore refused to pray, it was not the design of Heaven to vouchsafe. Every day seemed to take away from his remaining strength, and every day seemed to remove him further from earth, and nearer to Heaven. The sweet serenity that was habitually seated on his countenance declared that he felt himself

On the morn
Of some glad promise;

and in spite of the awe with which he could not but await the great impending change, those days which were most exempt from pain, were to Theodore days of peace and happiness. Claude and Venetia were not less unremitting in their watchful attentions to him than was his mother, and when they quitted his side, it was only with a desire to leave to them an unrestrained intercourse with each other. In all things they consulted the feelings of Lady Llarnarmon with a delicacy of perception, that secured them from ever jarring on them in the smallest trifle. It was not likely that an affection so pure and heavenly in its nature as that which Theodore had cherished for his brother, so unalloyed as it had been by any dross of earthly feelings, should wax more feeble as he approached nearer and nearer to the realms of unchanging love. Without any fear that his friend and brother could need any fresh assurances of his affection, he unremittingly devoted his remaining energies to the care of his mother, seeking strength for her in her weakness, soothing her distraction into calmness, invigorating her hope, wrestling with her despair. He sought to induce her to endure the presence and society of others in addition to his own, in the hope that their affectionate endeavours would not be wholly in vain, when employed for her comfort after his departure. In the solemn and touching hours of eve, with his head reclining on his mother's breast, with Claude and Venetia and Lady Esther near, would he reveal to their responsive hearts, all those glowing aspirations which tended to urge his spirit upwards, and almost gave it wings to soar to Heaven. Then

His saintly words would move
The understanding heart to tears of reverent love.

All these efforts on his part, aided not altoge-

ther ineffectually by others, succeeded in bri Lady Llarnarmon's mind to a state of g tranquillity, such as Theodore could regard less painful emotion. Still her calmer moods often broken in upon by dread misgivings insupportable agonies. She could not a these vacillations from her son, for she now to him like a child for support. She told hi her doubts and fears, in the hope that he mig able successfully to combat them, and he di unfrequently afford relief to her troubled It was a touching thing to see this woman, so haughty, so self-sufficing, so defying, now | ing in utter incapability of helping herself, on word that fell from the lips of that pale, w being, in whom the last faint spark of life only not extinct.

"In these hours of seriousness and wis nothing appeared to raise his spirits, or gladde heart, but the recollection of acts of goodness to excite his attention, but some opportunit; the exercise of the duties of religion. Every that terminated on this side of the grave received with coldness and indifference, an garded rather in consequence of the habit of ing it, than from an opinion that it deserved vit had little more prevalence over his mind a bubble that was now broken, a dream which he was awake. His whole powers engrossed by the consideration of another and all conversation was tedious that had not

tendency to disengage him from human affairs, and open his prospects into futurity."

Such are the words in which Johnson has described the last hours of a friend, and I know not how more truly to depict those of Theodore, than by transcribing them.

At length a day arrived, on the morning of which the brothers were alone with each other. and it was for the last time. Claude felt unable to break the silence that reigned in the chamber; there was an universal stillness that inspired him with an indefinite awe. Theodore's eyes were fixed on him, and he knew it; but he did not dare to encounter their gaze, for he knew that he should read in them a declaration fatal to his happiness. For the same cause he shrank from hearing his voice, and averted his looks from him, that he might not perceive by the parting of his lips that he was about to speak. His heart was raised in silent prayer, while the sickening apprehension he was enduring, caused the cold dew to start forth on his brow, and he did not weep, only because his wretchedness was too intense to allow such relief.

The dreaded moment came. Theodore began to speak in a low, distinct voice.

"Claude," he said, "dearest brother, my last act of love shall be to tell you with my own lips how near my dissolution is. I shall not survive this day. It is the last of my earthly existence. The last time that I shall see the break of

day; the last time that I shall feel the noon! heat; the last time the balmy breeze of even shall cool this fevered brow! Awful indeed is contemplation of the coming change! Yet can I believe that the rejoicing I feel is presumptuo It is no secret to you, dearest Claude, that it I been preceded by the deepest contrition, nor a you suppose it now to spring from aught but 'sweet hope that I may be forgiven!' Surely, brother, if you share this hope with me, will not grieve to see me quit this prison-hou of clay, this torture chamber wherein my sp has been confined, to enter into a mansion in the city of rest, the inhabitant whereof shall not sa 'I am sick.' Of our mutual love, strong as it in death I need not speak. One further proof enduring affection I have to implore from you; endeavour to follow me. Oh! Claude, I can come to you! Seek to come to me. If you lo me, seek to rejoin me!"

"Enough, Theodore," murmured Claude in voice suffocated with tears, "that thought receiles me to a longer abode on earth, for were to die with you, I could have little hope of accopanying you. Pray for me, my brother, before y go. Lift not your feeble voice; expend not yobreath; but with your heart supplicate that he after I may be where you shall be!"

And he buried his face in his hands, weep like a child. Theodore silently stretched forth his wasted hand, and placed it on his brother's head, earnestly recommending him to the favour of that God who had given him 'perfect peace.'

Let us leave the brothers alone, and draw a veil over the last sacred hours of communion which they held on earth!

The agonies of hourly increasing apprehension had this day rendered Lady Llarnarmon so ill, that it was with difficulty that she could drag herself to the bedside of her son. Venetia supported her thither with the utmost tenderness, and with a bosom harrowed by pity and anguish, watched there, without attempting to console, the grief of Claude and of this unhappy mother. All outward expression of sorrow was however awed into silence by the solemnity of the scene.

As evening approached, a lethargic slumber seemed to overpower Theodore's faculties. At first he strove to shake it off. Rousing himself, and beckoning Venetia towards him, with a look expressive of undiminished affection, he placed her hand in that of Claude, and then resigned his own to his mother's hold, from time to time returning her tender pressure, till its grasp was unnerved by death! He gradually yielded to the irresistible, though gentle influence of the torpor that stole over him. The last murmur that past his lips, fell on the attentive ear of Claude, and his words were:

<sup>&</sup>quot;This night I shall be with Him!"

He soon after expired, with a radiant smile of such ineffable bliss on his countenance, that those who beheld it, lost in that sight all sense of the sorrow of separation, in their ecstasy of gratitude for his happiness, and their desire to partake of it. But alas! alse! as the smile faded away, and gave place to the imperturbability of death, they began to know that he whom they loved so much was gone, and had left them behind.

But the deep and earnest grief of Claude and Venetia; the tender anguish which their bereavement caused them, afforded no parallel to the remorseful agony that drove the unhappy mother For days her life and her reason were to frenzy. alternately threatened. But she did not die, nor did she become insensible to the reality of her woe. No sudden cessation of her sufferings was granted to her. Some years of existence remained to be endured, and before she reached the end of their painful term, she had learnt to be truly grateful to Heaven for having accorded them. They were spent in penitential preparation for eternity. With a frame shattered and enfeebled by past violence of emotions, and a heart sometimes sickening with apprehension, and sometimes glowing with humble hope, she retired from a world that was no longer the sphere of her joys or fears; and without considering herself exempt from a performance of her remaining duties in it, she withdrew as much as possible from all share in the casualties of life, and spent all her time in strict seclusion. Her devotion to Lady Esther was unremitting, and from her pitying lips she heard the same holy truths, the same consolatory messages, and the same correcting precepts which Theodore had inculcated. They inspired patience, fortitude and calmness, and led to hope which sweetened the last hours of her life, and even rendered them hours of rejoicing.

The mortal remains of Theodore were transported to England, for his brother felt that he could not leave him behind him, that he must bear him back to the home of their father, the future place of his own residence.

The idea of making his grave among strangers, in a foreign land, was too repugnant to him. He felt not only the desire that in after years they might rest side by side, and together wake up from their slumber; but also he felt that during life he should be happier dwelling close to the spot where he reposed, than he could be, if he lay at a distance from him.

Among the mourners who beheld Theodore consigned to his tomb, was the venerable preceptor and guardian of his youth, towards whom he had borne a filial affection. He had not neglected after his departure to communicate, to him unreservedly every occurrence relating to himself and his brother. This his tender regard for him had led him to do by his own hand, as long as it had strength to express what his heart dictated; and afterwards by that of Claude did he continue to

transmit to him pages filled with all that of tend to soften to the old man's heart, bitter sorrow that awaited him in the valle shadow of death.

When Mr. Mordaunt and Claude me there was consequently little to be asked o either side, but both felt inexpressible co in mourning together; and when the forme the Castle to return to his solitary home, able to look back to the past, and on to t with resignation and serenity. Of the childr heart, one was waiting him in that regio there is no change, into which old infirmity told him that he was himse almost immediately to enter; while on the beheld invested with everything necessarthly happiness, and above all blessed possession of that calm and lofty spirit, the alike how to enjoy and how to resign.

The early fortunes of Claude made an in on his character that never was obliterate first draughts of the waters of life had bitter for him ever to regard its sparkling with desire to drink deeply of it. His his been too early saddened by grief, for him become a thoughtless votary of pleasure. seen, that to feed on the fruits of ambition tructive of the soul's health! He had with the instability of fortune's favour! He had to the grave the object of his tenderest as He journeyed on through life, like a pilgri

for a better land; too full of yearnings for home, and of blessed anticipations of the joys there awaiting him, to have leisure to mark the trifling inconveniences which he met with in his progress; too eager to arrive there to allow difficulties to obstruct him, or dangers to alarm his energetic mind. His undeviating principles afforded an unfailing support to Venetia, throughout every change and chance of life. The love that sprang from esteem and veneration increased with knowledge of the character that had first awakened those feelings. Venetia was a happy wife and mother, and her inevitable separation from her own beloved parents for long and frequent periods, was the most serious drawback to her felicity that she experienced. Lord Llarnarmon felt it, to be too much his duty to reside in the home of his ancestors to abandon it for any length of time, even for the pleasure of restoring Venetia to the bosom of the mother, whom he felt to be so deserving of her tenderest love.

No sooner were they returned to Llarnarmon Castle, than the first friend whom Claude wished his bride to welcome there, was the humble Ruth, the beloved sister of his heart, whom he entreated to promise never to quit his roof again. Ruth shed tears silently as she listened to his generous request. Venetia earnestly united her supplications to his, and the first tones of her sweet voice which reached the ear of Ruth, made her feel

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that she could love her her tenderly in her arms tears as though they had murmured an unhesitat never afterwards wished

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